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GETTING TOGETHER

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AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE OXFORD AND EDINBURGH WORLD CONFERENCES, 1937

Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged, Containing the Text of Statement and Concordat between the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches.

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Prayers For the Unity of God's People

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord that as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, who didst plan the Gospel for an undivided Church; refuse not, because of the misunderstandings of its message which rend the unity of Christendom, to continue thy saving work in the broken order of our making. Prosper the labors of all churches bearing the name of Christ and striving to further righteousness and faith in him. Help us to place the truth above our conception of it, and joyfully to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit wherever he may choose to dwell among men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd, who didst lay down thy life for thy sheep and dost quicken them with the food of thy Body and Blood; fill us with the spirit of thy love that we may freely spend and be spent in thy service, and assist us in bringing thy sheep, scattered throughout the world, into thy one flock; who livest and reignest with the Father in the Unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst unto thine Apostles, peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, regard not our sins, but the faith of thy Church; and grant to it that peace and unity which is according to thy will, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

GETTING TOGETHER

A Study Course on the 1937 World Conferences on LIFE AND WORK, AND FAITH AND ORDER

TO THE LEADER: The course here offered is designed for six study periods. For groups who can give more time to it, a twelve period arrangement is entirely feasible and the six sections are subdivided for that purpose.

Two general approaches are possible: (1) a study based wholly on the material contained herein; or (2) the book may be used as a guide for a full study of the actual reports of the two conferences, *The Message and Decisions of Oxford on Church, Community and State* (referred to in footnotes as "Oxf.") and *The Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order* (referred to in footnotes as "Edin."). (See *Suggested Reading* inside back cover.)

The questions are for general discussion. Their aim is not to crystallize the thought of the study group into the mental pattern of the Conferences but to stimulate original thinking. The recommended reading is to help members of the study group to visualize the setting of the Conferences and to augment the material herein provided. It is desirable that all members of a group should have the two conference reports; it is indispensable that the leader should have studied them, and have them at hand.

For individual study, this booklet will give a reasonably complete story of the two Conferences, without the use of additional material. Obviously, the results will be more satisfactory if the supplementary reading suggestions are followed.

THE OBJECTIVES of the study are (1) to seek to understand the social implications of the Christian Gospel as unfolded at Oxford, (2) to evaluate the results of the Conferences with reference to future activities in the field of Christian co-operation, (3) to increase knowledge and understanding of the divergent points of view to be recorded, and (4) to enlist others in the "Ecumenical Movement."

In so brief a booklet as this, it has not been possible to give consideration to supplemental reports approved by the Conference sections, but not considered by the Conferences as a whole. For six study periods, use at each session the material designated as Lesson I etc. For twelve periods subdivide each lesson according to the A and B headings.

Suggestions for the conduct of each session will be found in the material printed for the sessions. However, there is one emphasis which should mark each session, i.e. prayer. Much time at Oxford and Edinburgh was spent in prayer. That fact had much to do with the fine spirit of the Conferences, and with the unity and constructive results which followed. Let it be so also in your group. Begin each session with prayer for God's help. The collects for Whitsunday and the First

Sunday after Trinity are appropriate. Four suitable prayers are printed on page 2 of our pamphlet. You may prefer extempore prayer or a few moments of silent prayer. It would be fitting to allow time at the close of each study for intercession based on the themes discussed in the session. The Litany of Intercession used at Edinburgh (Forward Movement, 1¢ per copy for 20 or more) should be used at various times.

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

TO THE LEADER: Many members are unfamiliar with the purpose of the World Conferences held in Oxford and Edinburgh in 1937. Before any study of the topics considered at these Conferences or of the statements issued by them, it will be well to devote part, perhaps all, of the first session to the consideration of background and other introductory matter. This can be of great interest and should be presented in such a way as to awaken a keen desire to continue the study.

The pages which immediately follow dealing with "The Background of the Conference" will be of help in the discussion of the following questions:

What Happened at Oxford and Edinburgh?

1. *Who went to these Conferences?*
   Representatives from 45 nations and 123 churches.
2. *Why did they go?*
   "To find the ways by which all Christians could work together, grow together and ultimately achieve the reunion of Christendom in a Church whose witness and work should more clearly than ever before approximate the witness and work of its Founder."
3. *What did they do?*
   Oxford gave the entire two weeks to studying the social implications of the Christian Gospel—seeking a common mind and a united program. Oxford represented Unity in work. Five great subjects were considered:
   - The Church and Community
   - The Church and State
   - The Church and the Economic Order
   - The Church and Education
   - The Universal Church and the World of Nations (including The Church and War)

   Edinburgh spent its time in seeking to discover how far loyalty to the truth demands that our disagreements should continue to keep us from full union and communion with each other. The idea of the Conference grew out of a desire to find agreement in matters of faith leading to Christian Unity.
4. *What prepared the way?*
   See "Background of the Conferences" on next two pages.
5. *What should be the objectives of our group study?*
   See page 2.
6. *What do we mean by Christian Unity?*
   This point is much misunderstood. Bring out the facts:

(1) It is not simply *unity of spirit.* (That already existed or Oxford and Edinburgh would not have been possible.) (2) *Not uniformity*: Some congregations may use liturgical services while others may not, etc. (3) We mean a world Church organically united but with room for diversity in customs, worship and things not essential to its being.

NOTE: In many groups there are those who do not see the need for unity and are not aware of the evils of disunion. In fact, some people bristle at the mention of unity. Before such members can get any benefit from the study they should be led to see "the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions." The opening sermon at the Edinburgh Conference by Archbishop Temple dealt with this topic. An excellent summary of the sermon is found in *World Chaos or World Christianity?* by Henry Smith Leiper, pages 98 to 102.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE CONFERENCES

To understand the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences, one must go back twenty-seven years to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. This gathering, meeting in the same Assembly Hall as the Conference of 1937, brought together representative Protestant leaders to consider the responsibility of the Churches for giving the Christian Gospel to the world. Though great Christian conferences had been held from time to time, it remained for the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 to mark the beginning of the new era of world co-operation among the Churches.

Then came the War with its tragic disturbance of world life. Even Christian Councils had to be held in abeyance until a more favorable time. The War itself, however, created a new necessity for the Church, namely that it should rethink its mission, and find a common mind and a united program in the moral and spiritual turmoil following 1918. This necessity found expression in the World Conference on Life and Work at Stockholm, Sweden, in 1925, and the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1927. These were wider than Protestantism, including also the Old Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Ten years have passed since the last of these historic gatherings—years which have brought momentous changes in governments, economic life, moral standards, and spiritual outlook. It seemed to many Christian leaders all over the world that the influences set in motion at Stockholm and Lausanne should be carried forward into the new situation; and that the Christian Churches should again assemble to confer regarding their responsibilities. This feeling gave birth to the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences of 1937, the former continuing the work of Stockholm in seeking a Christian answer to pressing world problems, the latter that of Lausanne in striving for a deeper fellowship of understanding in the realm of faith and order.

The Conferences Meet

The Oxford Conference first met in the Sheldonian Theatre, but soon was transferred to the Town Hall. There the eight hundred delegates and associate delegates assembled, two and often three times a day, to hear addresses and reports and to discuss the pressing questions which the Conference faced.

The Edinburgh Conference met in the Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland. Each Conference did a large part of its work in Commissions whose duty was to discuss the issues in hand and formulate statements for presentation to the full sessions.

WORLD WIDE. The world character of the Conferences was evident to anyone who walked the streets of Oxford near the Town Hall or watched the delegates entering the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh. The eye was caught by an almost bewildering array of countenances and ecclesiastical garments, while the ear heard the sound of many tongues. Delegates came from 45 countries representing 123 communions. All of the eight great families of Christian believers

had representatives present except the Roman Church, although friendly observers from this communion were present by invitation. This vacancy occasioned real regret. The enforced absence of the delegates from the German Evangelical Church, due to government hostility, left another vacancy which was hard to fill. A notable group, and one which played an influential part in the Conferences, was that of the delegates from the newer Christian Churches, particularly those from the Orient.

OFFICERS. The six Presidents of the Oxford Conference were Dr. Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose saintly presence was a benediction to all; Dr. Germanos, the Archbishop of Thyateira, whose church in Asia Minor goes back to the days of the New Testament; Dr. Eidem, the Archbishop of Sweden, who follows in the succession of the revered Dr. Söderblom; Dr. Azariah, the Bishop of Dornakal in India, whose rare personality revealed the invaluable contribution of the Oriental Christians to the Church of today; Dr. Boegner of the Protestant Federation of France, who with his brethren has valiantly carried the banner of Evangelical life in that country; and Dr. William Adams Brown of the United States, whose theological leadership and ecumenical interest has made him a respected and loved figure in many lands. The presiding officer at Edinburgh was Dr. Temple, the Archbishop of York. His commanding physique, keen mind, and warm Christian spirit will never be forgotten. Beside Dr. Temple sat Dr. A. E. Garvie of London as Vice-Chairman, one whose quick wit and wise counsel added richly to the sessions.

NOTED DELEGATES. From the United States, as delegates to either or both of the Conferences, came Dr. James DeWolf Perry, Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Dr. John R. Mott, President of the International Missionary Council; Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; Dr. Francis J. McConnell, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; Dr. John R. Sampey, President of the Southern Baptist Convention; Dr. Lewis S. Mudge, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.; and many other leaders from American churches and interdenominational organizations. Never before in the history of Christendom have representatives from so many countries and communions come together.

LAYMEN. Laymen played an important part at Oxford. They headed three of the five Commissions: Sir Walter Moberly of London, Chairman of the University Grants Committee, the Commission on *Church and Community*; Professor Max Huber of Switzerland, formerly a Judge of the World Court at the Hague, the Commission on *Church and State;* and Professor J. P. R. Maud of Oxford, Dean of University College, the Commission on *Church, Community and State in Relation to the Social Order.*

Among other well-known figures at Oxford were the Marquess of Lothian, Sir Alfred Zimmern, Viscount Cecil, Sir Josiah Stamp, T. S. Eliot, Professor R. H. Tawney, Professor John MacMurray, and Basil Mathews. Lay delegates from the United States included such persons as Hon. Francis B. Sayre and Hon. Alanson B. Houghton of Washington, D. C.; Charles P. Taft, Cincinnati, Ohio; John Foster Dulles, New York; Dr. John H. MacCracken, New York; Mrs. Harper Sibley, Rochester, N. Y.; James M. Speers, New York; and Dean Elbert Russell, Durham, N. C.

YOUTH. Youth was represented at Oxford by one hundred Associate Delegates who held special sessions to discuss the issues before the Conference, and to plan their future program, especially as related to the World Youth Conference of 1939. These delegates attended the general sessions of the Conference. At Edinburgh, youth representatives attended the sessions of the Commissions as well as the plenary sessions of the Conference.

WORSHIP. The worship services at both Oxford and Edinburgh marked the high peak of spiritual experience in the Conferences. As the delegates assembled in the sacred atmosphere of St. Mary's Church, Oxford, or St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, unity was achieved. All were one before God. Differences of creed, name, polity, and heritage faded into insignificance before the greatness of the One God Whom all worshipped and the One Lord Who alone is the head of the Church.—Deane Edwards.

Part One. Oxford Conference

LESSON I-A

Church and Community[a]

Chairman of the Church and Community section: Sir Walter Moberly (Anglican) Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester; Dr. Kraemer of Holland, Secretary.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: The Church of Jesus Christ has to teach its message and fulfill its task in the midst of a disrupted world which is feverishly seeking its way out of its troubles[a]. What is the Church to say? How is it to act? What are individual Christians to believe and do?

TO THE LEADER: There are two terms it would be well to define at the beginning of this session:

I. *Church*—Two conceptions are possible, and both were in evidence at the Ecumenical Conferences.

1. *A religious association.* "The devout Christian came first. He and his fellow-believers united in free association to form a congregation. The conception of the Church was thus associational—the individual Christian being the primary fact. He and his fellow-believers united in free association to create a congregation and the Church was simply a conglomeration of such congregations." (See page 12 *The Church and Its Function in Society* by 't Hooft and Oldham.)

This was commonly accepted 50 years ago in the U. S. A., and still is in many circles.

2. *A supernatural fellowship.* The Church is something which, religiously speaking, precedes the individual Christian. It is a fellowship supernatural in origin and character. The individual Christian gets his status as such through coming into relationship with the supernatural life which flows to all generations through the Church.

This latter view has become more and more accepted by Christians on the continent of Europe. Their representatives at Oxford and Edinburgh felt that the primacy of the Church must be established and its supernatural character and authority must be recognized as well as man's utter dependence on that which it has to offer.

Which of the above views do you think is true, and why?

II. *Community*—may describe a geographical area as "The Community Chest of New York." It may be a racial association as "we Jews." Or it may refer to an association by which people of many races are bound together in some definite and continuing way which leads them to share experience and co-operate toward common ends. This is not a community which we *join.* It is "a web of organic corporate relationships which surround our life in concentric circles of ever-widening radius—family, neighborhood, race, people, nation, all humanity." So Christians speak of "the world community."

"For an increasing number of Christians the world community which possesses no geographical locus, no tangible structure, no unity of language or uniformity of custom, is a reality of far greater meaning and authority than the innumerable local, racial and natural com-

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a Oxf.p.55

munities which have traditionally claimed human devotion." From *Oxford Report.*

It would be well to point out to the group, especially to those who do not have the full report and its clearly marked divisions (not shown in *Getting Together*) that the Report on the Church and Community calls attention to three urgent problems:

(1) The problem involved in the State's elevation to divine status.
(2) The problem involved in racial discrimination.
(3) The problem involved in the establishment of a closer relationship between the Church and common life in deed as well as word.

1. The World Today

For this, the class is referred to page 55 of the Report of the Oxford Conference. The leader, or someone previously appointed by him, may briefly summarize this as an introduction to the first Section of the Report.

2. The Call to the Church[b]

The root cause of the difficulties in modern life is that men have tried to organize themselves on a purely secularistic basis with no reference to the Divine Will. Only in God is the secret of true unity among men. The first task of the Church, now as always, is to make known the Gospel and to assert the claim of Jesus Christ, as the Incarnate Word of God, to the lordship of all human life. Yet the Church's recall of the world to the feet of Christ must be preceded by the recall of itself; the separated Churches themselves must confess their sin and seek anew from God forgiveness and the cleansing of their life. With man's sin, pride, fear, and idolatry infecting human life, the Church is under obligation never to lose sight of its one supreme calling to bear witness, in deed as well as in word, to the higher way of life in Christ.

(a) The Church and National Community

The Church must accept its place in the community[c], without subordinating itself to the national life, guarding itself always against egotism, a failure to respect and appreciate the gifts of other peoples, and a tendency to give the nation divine status. Such evils destroy the Church's fellowship and corrupt the pure Word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which has been entrusted to it. Racial discrimination must be avoided. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, for ye are all one in Christ."

(b) The Church and Common Life

The Church today must establish close relationship with the common life of the people[d] in the midst of which it is called upon to work. The fact that men are more apt to criticize the Church than Christianity is due in no small part to the fact that organized Christianity has lost touch with the everyday activities and problems which fill men's lives. The changes in the world's attitude towards the Church's importance are a challenge to seek new areas and new means for the redemption of the common life.

(c) The Church and the World Order

God calls upon the Christian Churches in all lands to create and

b Oxf.p.56 c Oxf.p.59 d Oxf.p.61

to foster solidarity with one another[e] and to heal the divisions which now disrupt the family of mankind. The ecumenical movement which has found expression in the Conference at Oxford should become an integral part in the life of every Church, every local congregation, every individual Christian. To help to create it, to support it, to develop it, is a solemn responsibility to God who so loved the *world* that He gave His only begotten Son for its sin. Thus shall be plainly manifested to mankind in its disorder and division something of that peace and order of brotherly love which comes only from God and from Jesus Christ, His Son our Lord.

(d) The Church and the Nation

National pride[f], though God-given, has been and is being abused by man and made to serve sin. Any form of national egotism whereby the love of one's own people leads to the suppression of other nationalities or minorities, or to failure to respect and appreciate the gifts of other people, is sin and rebellion against God who is the Creator and Lord of all peoples. The deification of the nation must be utterly repudiated and irreconcilably opposed both by the individual Christian conscience and by the Christian Church in the name of God.

(e) The Church and Race

The relations between peoples of different races[g] presents a special problem of critical urgency to the Church. To conquer deep-seated antipathies and apprehensions peculiar to race relationships there is a constant need for the affirmation that all men are by birthright children of God, created in His image, and therefore, brothers and sisters to one another. Both in their private lives and in their churches, Christians should take the lead in developing greater sympathy for those in need because of unequal opportunity, those who suffer persecution, anger and spite because of their race. They will seek to bring it about that each racial group is judged by its best representatives and by the worthiest contributions it has made to the life of humanity. A conscious and constant effort should be made to resist the fears and suspicions which tend to arise from unlikeness and to cultivate friendship and co-operation in all undertakings that are of common concern in the life of the community. Here Christians must expect to sacrifice popularity in loyalty to Christian insight and love.

Questions for Discussion

1. How far does this summary express your point of view concerning the task of the Church in the modern world?
   With what points do you agree? Where do you disagree? How would your parish respond to this "call to the Church"? What changes would have to be made in its life?
2. To what extent does your attitude toward people of other races reflect the spirit of Jesus Christ?
   What is the attitude of the Church in your community on the race question?
3. What do you consider the chief failures of the Church in the United States in presenting the Christian Gospel?
   What is the relation between our preaching and our action?
   What would be the effect if the Christian Churches made a united approach to the solution of community problems?
4. The Oxford Conference repeatedly urged upon churches a call to repentance. What is involved for the individual and for the Church in answering the call? How ready are we to pay the price?

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e Oxf.p.63 f Oxf.p.64 g Oxf.p.64

Reference books for this lesson: Church and Community:

The Church and Community. Oxford Conference Study Series. The Oxford Report with Discussion Outlines. 15 cents. Universal Christian Council, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York.

Church, Community and State. J. H. Oldham. Booklet setting forth urgency of crisis confronting the churches and reasons for a new effort to meet it cooperatively. 47 pages. 25 cents.

The Church and Its Function in Society. T. Hooft-Oldham. (Especially chapter vi). Will shake us out of our complacency. Can the Church regain a moral and spiritual leadership? Willett, Clark, $2.

Church and Community. Composite authorship. (To be published in 1938.)

Christ's Way and the World's. Leiper. Chap. 1-3. One of the preparatory books of the Oxford Conference. Useful for a clear survey of the main issues discussed. Abingdon Press.

LESSON I-B

Church and State

The meetings of the Church and State section were held with Professor Max Huber of Switzerland as Chairman. Professor Huber is the President of the International Red Cross and a former member of the Hague Court of Arbitration. The Rev. N. Ehrenstrom, Church of Sweden, was Secretary.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT: To inquire what problems the growing power of the State and the secularization of modern society presents to Christians both in their individual and in their corporate capacity.

TO THE LEADER: The two facts mentioned below under *The Present Situation* form the background for this study. The session may be introduced by a few statements which will explain their significance.

For (a) "the growing dechristianization of society," see *That They Go Forward* by Eric Fenn. On page 26, there is an excellent summary of the gradual change from the time when the standards recognized by the State were Christian standards, and ethical principles were accepted in theory at least to the time of the World War with its "stark revelation of the brutality of man," and the things which have happened since.

In relation to (b), "the widespread tendency of the State to control the totality of human life," a few words may be profitably spoken about the totalitarian State and its claims. It should be pointed out that the totalitarian claims of Christ on the individual is the reason for the conflict between a totalitarian State and the Christian faith.

The Standpoint Taken

Fundamental Considerations

Witnessing to the revelation which God has given us in Jesus Christ, we, as human beings, subject to the limitations of finiteness and the guilt of sin, share responsibility for the evils of our time and must approach the subject of our relation to the State in a spirit of repentance[a].

The Present Situation

The duty laid upon the Church to reconsider its relations to the State[b] is emphasized by two facts: (a) the growing dechristianization

a Oxf.p.66 b Oxf.p.68

of society and (b) the widespread tendency of the State to control the totality of human life in all its individual and social aspects, combined with the tendency to attribute absolute value to the State itself, to the natural community, to the dominating class, or to the prevailing cultural form.

Need for Repentance

The supreme duty of the Churches[c] in all countries as they face the present situation in the world of States and nations is to repent before God, not only by corporate acts of repentance, but by awakening the spirit of repentance in all their members; repentance for things done and for things left undone. Too often the churches have been far more concerned for their own security and prestige in this world than for fulfilling their Lord's commission and serving mankind in self-sacrificing love.

The Distinctive Functions of Church and State

The Church's concern is to witness to men of the realities which outlast change because they are founded on the eternal Will of God. The concern of the State is to provide men with justice, order and security in a world of sin and change. Since God is the source of justice, we do not consider the State as the ultimate source of law but rather as its guarantor. It is not the lord, but servant of justice. There can be for the Christian no ultimate authority but God Himself.

The distinctive character of the Church's activity is the free operation of grace and love. The distinctive character of the State's activity, whatever its constructive function in the cultural and social life may be, is the power of constraint, legal and physical.

It is true that our Lord told His disciples to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. But it is God who declares what is Caesar's. Therefore the Christian must always, whether as a member of the Church or as a citizen, obey the Will of God.

Duties of the Church to the State

The primary duty of the Church to the State[d] *is to be the Church,* namely, to witness for God, to preach His word, to confess the faith before men, to teach both young and old to observe the divine commandments and to serve the nation and the State by proclaiming the Will of God as the supreme standard to which all human wills must be subject and all human conduct must conform. These functions of worship, preaching and ministry the Church cannot renounce whether the State consent or not.

Duties with Reference to the Individual State[dd]

These duties are (a) that of praying for the State, its people and its governments; (b) that of loyalty and obedience to the State, disobedience becoming a duty only if obedience would be clearly contrary to the command of God; (c) that of co-operation with the State in promoting the welfare of the citizens and of lending moral support to the State when it upholds the standards of justice set forth in the Word of God; (d) that of criticism of the State when it departs from those standards; (e) that of holding before men in all their legislation and administration those principles which make for the upholding of the

c Oxf.p.68 d Oxf.p.70 dd Oxf.p.70

dignity of man who is made in the image of God; (f) that of permeating the public life with the spirit of Christ and of training up men and women who as Christians can contribute to this end.

The Freedom of the Church

In a State which is Christian by profession it is self-evident that the Church should be free to the fullest extent to fulfill its functions.[e] "We recognize as essential conditions to the Church's fulfillment of its primary duty that it should enjoy (a) freedom to determine its faith and creed; (b) freedom of public and private worship, preaching and teaching; (c) freedom from any imposition by the State of religious ceremonies and forms of worship; (d) freedom to determine the nature of its government and the qualifications of its ministers and members, and, conversely, the freedom of the individual to join the Church to which he feels called; (e) freedom to control the education of its ministers, to give religious instruction to its youth, and to provide for adequate development of their religious life; (f) freedom of Christian service and missionary activity, both home and foreign; (g) freedom to co-operate with other churches; (h) freedom to use such facilities, open to all citizens or associations, as will make possible the accomplishment of these ends, as e.g., the ownership of property and the collection of funds."

The Present Task of the Church

Among present tasks[f] of the Church and its members are: repentance; co-operation in community, nation and the world; co-operation with the State in such constructive tasks as may be for the good of the whole; the guarding of opportunities for worship, witness, service and education; sympathetic interest towards those who are victims of cruelty and oppression and a willingness to come to their assistance; public renunciation of all forms of persecution, whether by Christians against other Christians, or by Christians against adherents of other religions.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think should be the relation of the Church to the State?
   How would you explain the distinctive functions of the Church? Of the State?
   Wherein lies the cause of the conflict between the two?
2. What do we mean by "Separation of Church and State"?
   How far is the ideal realized in modern society? In the United States? In Germany? In Japan? In England?
3. What responsibility has the Church toward the political life of the community or nation?
   What responsibility has the Christian individual? How far should the Christian enter politics?
5. What is the difference between the responsibility of individual Christians and of the Church in its organized capacity (a) in forming political opinion, (b) for definite political action as in supporting legislation or candidates for office?
4. What do you think the Conference Report means by saying that the "Church should be the Church"? Do you agree?
   Under what circumstances may resistance to the authority of the State become a Christian duty?
6. Do you think the increasing activity of the State in social affairs, e.g. unemployment, old age pensions, the care of the sick, etc., is legitimate and desirable? Are these things the function of the State or of the Church?

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e Oxf.p.71 f Oxf.p.73

Reference books for this lesson: The Church and State

The Church and State. Oxford Conference Study Series. 15 cents.

Christ's Way and the World's. Leiper. Chap. v.

Church and State. Rhyllis. Headline book of Foreign Policy Association. Popular study of Church and State issues in many lands. Illustrated with charts. 46 pages. 25 cents.

Loyalties to Church and State. H. W. Fox. Student Christian Movement Press.

That They Go Forward. Eric Fenn. 50 cents. Student Christian Press, London. Can be purchased from Association Press, or Universal Christian Council, New York.

Ten Authorities Other Than God. Universal Christian Council. Especially the questions in Study Six.

LESSON II-A

The Church and the Economic Order

Dr. J. P. R. Maud (Anglican) of University College, Oxford, was Chairman, and Dr. John Bennett of Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, New York, Secretary.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To understand the Christian concern for the social and economic order as guided by the mind of Christ.

TO THE LEADER: This report is a remarkable statement. It should be known and studied throughout the Church. It will furnish material for study for a long while to come. Men and women who made it were renowned leaders in the Church and men of large experience in public and business affairs. It was "accepted by the Conference with little disagreement with the principles set forth and none of a really serious nature."

This degree of unanimity in the final stages was all the more remarkable when we consider the difficulties in earlier stages.

An American financier, a member of the section, was overheard to say to a business friend, "I can't stand any more of that discussion. You go and vote no on everything. That will represent both of us." He later was among those who defended the section's findings.

It is one of the most thorough-going of the Reports issuing from the Oxford Conference.

Things to Note About This Section's Report:

(1) It stresses this fact: Christians must bring the organization of society just as truly as the practices of individuals under scrutiny from the Christian point of view. If it fails to pass that scrutiny, it must be superseded and replaced. This idea that Christian judgment applies as much to the social order and structure as to the conduct of individuals is perhaps the most important single idea in the report. Christianization of the social structure is as much a part of Christian effort as the redemption of the individual. This is the heart of the social gospel.

(2) It is not a commitment to radicalism and does not demand "revolution." But it does absolutely require that if the Christian makes up his mind that the existing economic system is not Christian, then he is obliged to be a *revolutionary*, that is, to work for a more Christian social order.

(3) The report is marked by what we might call a "newer social gospel." "It has no illusions about the obstacles any social program will encounter because of human selfishness. It embodies a social faith and resists all pessimism about the world while at the same time it guards against a superficial optimism that trusts in natural progress."

(4) It brings its principles of social and economic justice right into the Church itself as you will see in the conclusion, and says the Church must set its own house in order.

In general the report undertook to discover what are the main un-Christian aspects of the social order in which we live. It is a great charter for the social and economic life of the Church. It calls us to (a) *repentance* for our failure to be concerned with problems of social justice; (b) *Unity,* a divided Church is ineffective in social change and economic justice; (c) a *realization* of the gospel as power. It takes power to accomplish what needs to be done; and (d) *courage.* The meeting at Oxford gives us new courage to go out and translate into the life of the market-place the will of God, and affirm it must be done.

Some definition of terms used may be necessary, such as "the present capitalistic system," "profit," etc. The course on Oxford in *The Christian Advocate* for 1938, page 368 defines "profit" as "that proportion of the product of industry which is left after wages of labor, salaries, rent on land and interest on capital at current (the borrowing rate) have been paid."

[Keep in mind the principles and logic which guided those preparing this report

1. The relevance of Christian faith to the problems of economic life.
2. The Christian faith is independent of specific programs for economic change.
3. The Church should function in economic life primarily through its lay members who are in industry and commerce and who as citizens must make political decisions affecting the economic order.
4. The Church must advance beyond generalities but must stop short of prescribing particular solutions of economic problems. (See Oxf. p. 97.)]
5. Christians and the Churches must themselves live by just economic principles.]

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1. Christian Love Must Work for Justice

The Christian approach[a] to the problems of the social and economic order can only be made from the standpoint of faith in God as revealed in Christ. Therefore the love of God involves an obligation to love our neighbors as ourselves. We must love our fellowmen because God loves them and wills to redeem them.

Far above the principle of justice which orders the life of men, restraining evil and the evil-doer, is the higher obligation which transcends the requirements of justice—the obligation of a love which is the fulfillment of the law.

This love is, however, no substitute for law,[b] for institutions or for systems. Individual acts of charity within a given system of government or economics may mitigate its injustices and increase its justice. But they do not absolve the Christian from seeking improved institutional arrangement and social structure for the ordering of human life.

a Oxf.p.75 b Oxf.p.78

Christianity becomes socially futile if it does not recognize that love must assure justice and that the Christian is under obligation to secure the best possible social and economic structure, in so far as such structure is determined by human relations. (Note the subtle temptation here. Charity and good works is not enough. The Christian must work for social change.)

Two errors are repudiated:[c] (1) that which makes Christianity futile as a guide to decisions in the political, social and economic sphere; and (2) that which would equate any particular social system within the Kingdom of God.

The obligation to love our neighbors as ourselves places clearly under condemnation all social and economic systems which give one man undue advantage over others.[d] It insists that underprivileged children have the fullest opportunities to develop whatever gifts God has given them; it challenges any social system which provides unmerited social privileges or which creates luxury and pride on the one hand and want and insecurity on the other; it makes the conscience of the Christian particularly uneasy in regard to the deprivation of basic security for large masses of human beings.

2. Analysis of the Present Economic System

[This statement is necessarily much condensed. The whole of this portion of the report should be carefully read. It states the Christian ideal and that often exceeds the possibilities of a practical situation. If compromises have to be made, they should be acknowledged as such. "It is the prime function of religion in social affairs to keep the requirements of an absolute ideal ever before us so that we shall never confuse the practicable with the ultimately good."]

Concentrating on what may broadly be described as the capitalist economic system,[e] it is evident that the dawning of the capitalistic age must be considered a definite step in the progress of humanity, in that it allows free development of human potentialities, in contradistinction to the restrictions of the Middle Ages. The present system of free enterprise is responsible for great industrial development and for raising the general standard of living. Furthermore, the mechanization of industry has reduced the physical labor of manual workers and has brought all parts of the world into interdependence with each other.

At the same time[f], the human side of economic life has been adversely affected in that capitalistic production has not escaped the danger of treating human labor as a commodity, to be bought at the least possible price and to be utilized to the greatest possible extent. Unhappily, the same forces which produced material progress have often enhanced inequalities, created permanent insecurity and subjected all members of modern society to the domination of so-called independent economic "laws." The competitive superiority of large-scale production has gone far to destroy the old traditional society of craftsmen and farmers and thereby has created a society which is characterized in many countries by the concentration of wealth on the one hand and the existence of large urban masses on the other. The progressive mechanization of industry has periodically thrown large

c Oxf.p.78-79 d Oxf.p.80 e Oxf.p.81 f Oxf.p.83

numbers of workers into long periods of unemployment. The cycle of industrial fluctuations has caused a tremendous waste of productive power and, in consequence, "poverty in the midst of plenty."

Other evils[g] resulting from industrial expansion and technical progress lie in the fact that leading industrial and financial groups have been tempted to obtain the support of the State for their particular interests, and the original idea of modern democracy has thus in practice become increasingly difficult to achieve.

The rise of socialism and communism[h] represents a protest against the evil results of the capitalist economic order from those who suffered chiefly from it. In several countries, this protest, partly due to the Church's being involved in the social and cultural attitudes of the society on which they were frequently dependent, allied itself with a radical denial of Christianity, the Church and belief in God.

Facing this situation[i], the Christian Churches must first of all acknowledge and repent of their blindness to the actual situation and must open their eyes to the fact that God has spoken to their conscience through these movements, by revealing through them the real situation of millions of their members. On the other hand, the churches must continue resolutely to reject those elements in the actual development of communism which conflict with Christian truth.

3. Challenges to the Christian Understanding of Life

The Christian understanding of life[j] is challenged by the present feverish scramble for money and the false respect gained by victors in the struggle, by the disparities of economic circumstances which prevent full personal development for the rising generation as a whole, and by racial discrimination.

4. Christian Faith and Economic Reform

In response to such challenges[k], it is clearly the duty of Christians to test by the canons of their faith not merely their individual conduct and the quality of their private lives, but also the institutional framework of organized society. In so far as they are true to their creed, they cannot either take the economic system for granted, or dismiss it as irrelevant to the life of the spirit. They are bound to require its moral credentials; to examine those credentials in the light of Christian doctrine as to the nature of God and man; and, in so far as it fails to satisfy that criterion, to use every effort to amend or to supersede it. Definitely incompatible with membership in the Christian Church is the complacent defense of exclusive privilege on the one hand and unteachable and self-righteous fanaticism on the other.

Modern industrial nations agree in two proposals[l] for economic reform: (a) the exercise of greater control upon holders of great economic power; and (b) the equalizing of the inequalities of economic society by heavy taxation on the one hand and by social legislation on the other.

In the Christian Church, where fellowship in Christ transcends the differences of the present economic situation, there shoud be no fanatical hatred toward members of other groups[m]; rather, a recognition

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g Ox.p.84 h Ox.p.85 i Ox.p.85 j Ox.p.87 k Ox.p.92 l Ox.p.94 m Ox.p.96

that they and their opponents are both sinners in the presence of God, thus contributing towards a moderation of the present struggle between social groups.

5. Christian Teaching in Relation to the Economic Order

In general there are five principles which show the Christian position:

(1) Economic arrangements must not frustrate or restrict fellowship.
(2) Every child must have opportunities suitable to the full development of his particular capacities and free from handicaps in regard to health and environment.
(3) Disabled persons must be cared for.
(4) Labor must not be considered as a commodity.
(5) The resources of the earth are the gift of God to the whole human race.

(See this whole Section, *Oxford,* pages 97 to 112.)

6. Immediate Christian Action

The Church must set its own house in order. There should be more co-operation between clergy on the one hand and, on the other, those of the laity who are engaged in industry, commerce and public administration. Christians should bring to "the daily round and common task" an integrity and faithfulness that would bear constant witness to their calling; they should be willing to take part in such co-operative movements as provide large field for social action and fellowship.

Church property is exempt from taxation because of the belief of the community that religious principles and behavior are of value to the community as a guide and example. Churches, therefore, should examine their treatment of their employees, their investment policies and their methods of raising money.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you understand by the phrase "the Kingdom of God"? How are love and justice related to it, and to each other?
2. What attitude do you think the Church should take toward social and economic change? Toward such aspects of economic life as the concentration of wealth, labor unions, unemployment?
3. To what extent is the Christian Church responsible for the rise of anti-religious radical movements?

   What do you consider the most effective ways by which Christian people can prevent the growth of such movements?
4. What part does your own Church group play in the solution of social and economic questions? Should the clergy preach on these questions?

   What opportunity for fellowship across economic and social lines does your Church offer?

Reference books for this lesson: The Church and the Economic Order:

Church and the Economic Order. Oxford Conference Study Series. 15 cents.

Christianity and Our World. John C. Bennett. Lucid explanation of economic and international problems and of the faith with which Christianity confronts them. 50 cents.

Christ's Way and the World's. Leiper. Chap. vi.

Social Salvation. John C. Bennett. Scribners 1935.

A Better Economic Order. Forward Movement Guide No. 3, 406 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Christian Faith and Economic Change. H. F. Luccock, Abingdon Press.

LESSON II-B

The Church and Education

Chairman: Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin (Presbyterian) of Union Theological Seminary, New York. Secretary, Rev. J. W. C. Dougall of London.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To see the Church's rightful part in Education as distinguished from that of the State; and the crucial issue and immediate tasks of the Church and Education.

TO THE LEADER: This report is an analysis of present-day education and in general it is an indictment of it. The question of the relation of organized Christianity needs much re-thinking and study. So despiritualized and secularized and therefore so inadequate has our educational system become that the question is raised whether other Churches should not follow the example of the Roman Communion and take back the educational function which they have transferred to the State. Is this the solution of the problem of our unsatisfactory present-day education?

One of the chief obstacles which has prevented religion from making any greater impact on general education has been the controversies and lack of unity among Christians. This important fact and its bearing must not be forgotten in this study. Let it also be borne in mind that the function of religion in education is something far more than the subject matter. "It involves an entire outlook upon life. Irreligion can be taught in classes in history, philosophy and science. Atheism can be taught in the form of social pessimism."

1. Introduction

Education is the process[a], running from rudimentary skill and knowledge up to the interpretations of the universe and man, by which the community seeks to open its life to all the individuals within it and to enable them to take their part in it. We are principally concerned with the mutual relations of Church, Community, and State and their spheres in determining the effect of education on the inner life of man.

2. Church, Community and State in Education

THE CHURCH is concerned[b] that every child and adult shall receive the fullest education consistent with his capabilities; but she must make plain that no education is adequate without the living encounter with God and the response of adequate faith.

The Church, being a fellowship of persons freed by the Spirit of Christ, should be opposed to an education which teaches men to subordinate themselves to any human force as the final authority; and equally opposed to any system which stimulates the unconditional self-expression of the individual.

Being a redemptive and sanctifying fellowship[c], the chief concern is to bring every child and adult under the control of Christ, the products of such Christian education being patriots, but discerning patriots, both appreciative and critical of the national life and institutions which it is the aim of the Church's education to develop.

As a supra-national fellowship, with a heritage of greater worth than any national inheritance, the Church inculcates loyalty to God

a Oxf.p.113 b Oxf.p.114 c Oxf.pp.115 to 119

above loyalty to the State, and places fidelity to the Christian fellowship above fidelity to the nation.

As a supra-racial fellowship, embracing in her brotherhood men of every blood and color, the Church is compelled to protest against injurious discriminations by those of one race against those of another.

As a supra-class fellowship, there should be no place for social distinctions in the Church. Its members must be especially concerned with those groups in a community which are least privileged and must labor to obtain for them a just share in the national heritage.

As an eternal fellowship, the Church regards life as a preliminary education for an immortal destiny. Her real concern is with regeneration and her educational task is therefore two-fold: (a) she must share in the education of the whole man, body, mind and spirit and (b) she must impart the spirit and habit of worship and bring men to share in the active life of Christian fellowship.

THE STATE is concerned[d] with educating its people to be loyal and capable citizens or subjects, devoted with soul and mind and strength to their nation. It usually seeks to provide at least the minimum education for all, and to open further opportunities of learning to the talented. In this era of social disintegration the governments of certain States now seek to control all agencies which influence human belief and behavior including the school system, the press, broadcasting and moving pictures for the purpose of inculcating their own ideals. Others, placing more emphasis upon freedom, recognize the rights of such agencies to share in the task of education. Such States regard their culture as a stage of development and do not impose it rigidly upon the minds of their youth.

THE COMMUNITY, in its social, economic and political relationships, is a more potent educational influence than any formal schooling. Christian education is therefore deeply concerned with shaping the patterns of community life in a way that will foster Christian insights and conduct.

The Church has a particular interest in the institutions of learning existing in some lands which are officially under neither Church nor State control. In such institutions, truths and values not yet generally accepted, or out of fashion, may be developed and conserved and the institutions serve as allies of the Church in furnishing religious education, although not under any denominational oversight.

3. Factors in the Present Situation[e]

complicating the relations of Church, Community and State are: (a) *The secularization of modern life* which denies or ignores the Christian meaning of life; (b) faith in man's power to direct his destiny, resulting from the rapid advances in the sciences and the development of machinery; (c) *social disintegration* which has tended to destroy the bonds which formerly linked men in their communal life; (d) *the weakening of family ties,* now such a menace that even in normally Christian homes, a religious background cannot be taken for granted; (e) *new educational agencies,* such as broadcasting and moving pic-

d Oxf.p.119 e Oxf.pp.121 to 124

tures, which may promote propaganda, and distort values at the expense of true education; (f) *the increasing intervention of the State in education,* frequently causing tension in the home, the community and the Church.

4. Crucial Issues for Christians[f]

Four major issues on which Church and State conflict in education are: (a) *freedom,* which is threatened by political propaganda, attempting to make the individual conform to sharply defined patterns, these patterns being sub-Christian, and imbued with a rigidity which cramps the growth of Children of God.

The freedom sought by the Church is both liberty from the tyranny and deceit of evil passions within the heart, and strength of character to preserve liberty of conscience amid external pressure. (b) *Social disintegration,* which raises a barrier against the distinctive fellowship of the Christian faith and its opposition to any deification of the community or State. Recognizing the claim of the State and loyal obedience to what the State demands of him, the Christian is, at the same time, called upon to assert his loyalty to God, penitently to remember the compromises and unconvincing witness of the churches and to recognize, in the contemporary pressure of aggressive non-Christian system, one of God's methods of recalling her to a fresh discovery of the truths and ideals of which she is the trustee. (c) *Control of Youth Movements* which challenges the Church to fight the State control of youth organizations and to enlist the devotion of the youth of the land for God's purpose for mankind. (d) *Modern Knowledge, Method and Technique,* which require the Church to keep abreast of the times, acknowledging the aid which modern knowledge can give in education and yet remembering that technique alone will not suffice to build up the whole man into Christ. It is only through the healing mercy of God that mental and spiritual health can be fully attained.

5. The Immediate Tasks of the Church in Education[g]

The Church's own disunion is a greater impediment than is any outside restriction. If the Church is to discharge her teaching duty, she must bring her communion into a common front on educational issues and unite her forces in fulfilling this urgent task.

The attempt to create a common mind[h] on the fundamentals of Christian faith and conduct has often failed; but there are basic assumptions acceptable to all Christians, (e.g. the conviction that there is one living and true God revealed in Christ whose purpose is to redeem mankind) which should be expressed in a living theology and embodied in the minds and lives of all Christians in the teaching profession. Necessary, too,[i] is the formulating of a philosophy of education from the Christian standpoint, and the developing of a psychology which does not disregard the significance of religious experience, but finds in man's relationship with God the supreme power in human personality.

Mothers and fathers[j] ought to be aware of the influence of their children resultant from their own way of life. Introduction to the Bible and to worship should be given, wherever possible by parents. The Church should assume responsibility regarding the supply, training and

f Oxf.pp.124 to 128 g Oxf.p.128 h Oxf.p.129 i Oxf.p.132 j Oxf.pp.132 to 139

encouragement of Christian teachers. It must be remembered that the supreme importance of Sunday School work is in the teacher's own Christian experience and love of children. Lay leadership which combines intellectual ability with vital Christian experience is necessary for the effective presentation of the Church's message. Emphasizing the possibilities of Christian service in youth movements is of importance. The Church, as well as the State and community, should contribute to the enjoyment of sports, music, literature, the drama, travel and countryside excursions, thus educating her people in the meaning and use of leisure.

The Church's largest contribution to education is her Gospel, with its interpretation of existence and its inspiration to live worthily. "In Thy light shall we see Light."

The Church and Public Education[k]

In countries where the government is responsive to Christian opinion, and yet has its own efficient system of education, the Church should maintain many schools of her own as she can effectively equip and staff as a demonstration of truly Christian educational standards. Wherever possible, she should provide for the teaching of the Bible in the public school system by teachers of adequate training and conviction. In some places it may be better to arrange for the release of the children at certain hours for Christian instruction outside the school. One of the main responsibilities of the Church is the provision of religious education in colleges and universities. This may be done by services of public worship, also student Christian movement, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A. and the work of college chaplains. Full regard should be given in the choice of college workers to distinction in intellectual capacity and to spiritual and moral qualities.

Christian Education in a Non-Christian Environment[l]

A great field for the Church lies in lands which welcome the provision of schools by Christian Missions. The Church must use this opportunity to the full in order to provide Christian leadership. Her responsibility here is in developing a synthesis of an appreciation of all that is good in the culture of each nation and race with the overruling loyalty to God. It is of importance that the Church should make her education efficient in her mission schools and beware of identifying the name of Christ with the inefficient. This may be accomplished in some situations by a combination of the resources of the churches. A valuable opportunity is also afforded to exercise Christian influence through supplying teachers in State Schools.

There are countries today in which the Church is greatly restricted in its efforts to further our Christian influence in education. Opportunities still are open, however, through parents and the influence of Christian teachers. The Church should not sacrifice her institutions of learning in countries where she is at present inhibited from Christian teaching. The situation will surely change some day and the Church must not think in decades but in generations. Many teachers are needed in Mission Schools.

k Oxf.pp.139 to 143 l Oxf.pp.143 to 148

Questions for Discussion

1. To what extent should the government exercise control over schools and other educational agencies? What dangers do you see in such control?
2. How can the Church play a more effective part in the education of the children and young people of the community? Of the men and women? How practicable is week-day religious education?
   What would you think of subsidizing parochial schools?
3. How is the Church training its own children in the Christian way of life? In the home? In Church Schools?
   What suggestions have you for improving the Church Schools in your community?
   What contribution should the Church be making in the field of higher education? In the training of teachers and leaders?
4. In a non-Christian and possibly restrictive environment, have Mission Schools still any opportunities for Christian education?
5. What is the relation between missionary education in the parish and missionary interest? What do you think is an adequate parish program in Christian doctrine, history, missions, religious ethics and social responsibility? Is the sermon sufficient?

Reference books for this lesson: The Church and Education:

The Church and Education. Oxford Conference Study Series. 15 cents.

Church, Community and State in Relation to Education. Composite authorship. Published in 1938. Life and Work Office.

Character in Human Relations. Hugh Hartshorne. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. $2.50.

LESSON III-A

The Universal Church and the World of Nations

Chairman: Dr. John Mackay (Presbyterian), Princeton Theological Seminary. The Rev. W. Paton of London (leader in Missionary Education), Secretary.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To see that only a united (ecumenical) Church can come to the help of a divided world.

TO THE LEADER: In your introduction to this subject, it will help clarify the thinking of your group to point out that the Report on this subject falls into three main divisions: (1) the universal or ecumenical Church, (2) the hope of a Christian world order, and (3) the Church and War. The latter was assigned to a branch section which brought in a separate report. (See Lesson III-B.)

In a sense, the Report we are now to study is the culmination of the Oxford Conference. The conviction it embodies is that the Church has a special function to fulfill in achieving a better international order and that it has unique qualifications for this task:

First: Its universal character. Its missionary successes during the past one hundred years have made the Church world-wide. It has demonstrated its power to transcend national barriers and racial divisions.

Second: Its insight into human nature derived through centuries of proclaiming the transforming power of the Gospel.

The emphasis in this session will therefore be on the Mission of the Church to establish the Kingdom of God on earth and the imperative necessity of achieving reunion in order that it may accomplish its task.

1. The Present Situation[a]

The Conference called upon all members of the churches to remain steadfast in their faith in God, the chief source of strength in the present situation, when the hearts of men fail them for fear. Unsolved or aggravated problems left by the Great War have resulted in a state of tension, expressed in selfish isolation, antagonistic national groupings, rearmament on a colossal scale and in a universal fear that a war which all nations dread is at hand. Economic depression has increased the conviction that nations must rely upon themselves for security, with little regard for considerations of national morality. In the midst of this bewildered and dejected world in which we now find ourselves, the Church must call all men to repentance, to faith and to a compassionate concern for the multitudes who suffer.

2. The Ecumenical Church[b]

That the Christian Church is becoming truly ecumenical gives hope to those needing faith and courage amid the perplexities of our age. What does "ecumenical" mean? It means world-wide, i.e. concerning the whole household of the faithful, or, the entire Christian Church in conscious fellowship; a term more inclusive than "pan-Protestant," and more spiritually significant than "international." Though there is a lack of true fellowship between many of the churches, and the church of Rome remains outside, the ecumenical movement is an unmistakable sign that the Church is alive to the God-given vision of the Church Universal. It carries with it the conviction that the Church brings to the task of achieving a better international order an insight that is not to be derived from ordinary sources.

Carrying on in the ecumenical movement, churches must not simply be tolerant towards one another, but concerned with unity one with the other. With her members active in every sphere of life, resident in every land, owing allegiance to every form of State, the Church is concerned with the whole world and the whole life within it.

3. The Kingdom of God and the International Order

No international order which can be devised by human effort may be equated with the Kingdom of God. Yet the attitude of Christians toward these specific schemes of a better international order should be governed by their obedience to the living God and their understanding of His purpose in Christ. This attitude relates not only to matters concerning their own particular governments but the relation of governments to each other and to the individuals within them.

4. Difficulties in the Establishment of an International Order[c]

It is necessary from the Christian standpoint, to abandon the claim of each national State to be judge of its own cause; the Church should urge this duty upon the nations. Conceiving and carrying on relations between States in terms of power is not merely uncivilized; it is also utterly un-Christian. All law, international as well as national, must be based on a common foundation of moral convictions.

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a Oxf.p.151 b Oxf.pp.152 to 154 c Oxf.p.156

5. Conditions of Peaceful Change[d]

To bring this about in international affairs, it devolves upon Christians to work towards securing by voluntary action of their nations such changes in the international order as will avoid injustice and promote equality of opportunity for individuals throughout the world, and governmental action to require of statesmen and politicians a broader vision than now exists of the true welfare of their nation. Since unequal distribution of natural bounties is a cause of war, Christian people should move their governments to abstain from creating monopolies for national advantage.

6. Attempts to Organize an International Order[e]

Here the League of Nations comes up for consideration. While the League has not been able to fulfill the hopes reposed in it, we must remember that it is not a government, and criticism of it is really directed to the governments of its member states; it is not a church, but it has pledged itself to a great ideal and, as a standing agency of co-operation between fifty or more independent governments, it represents the most considerable effort yet made in the world's history to enable the governments to consult together, to plan together, and to act together. Although the Covenant of the League has not been fully observed, the value of idea on which it was founded—that of international co-operation—has not been disproved. Until the problem of power-politics and the attitude of mind which it represents is solved, world community as a fact must remain an aspiration. The Church cannot leave the duty of peace-making to political agencies. It should be able, by the leading of the Spirit, to discover characteristically Christian ways of being a healing and reconciling influence in a world of conflict.

Questions for Discussion

1. What evidences are there that the Church is becoming ecumenical? What is your conception of a United Church?

   How far should differences of culture and heritage be provided for in the Church Universal?
2. What do you think the Church can do toward establishing a better international order?
3. In what ways does our present lack of unity hinder the Church in this task?
4. To what extent have Christian principles been tried in the solution of international problems?

   What part have Christian Missions played in promoting international understanding?

Reference books for this lesson: The Universal Church and the World of Nations:

Christianity and Our World. John C. Bennett.

The Universal Church and the World of Nations. Oxford Conference Study Series. 15 cents. (Pamphlet.)

The Universal Church and the World of Nations. Oxford Conference Series. Composite authorship. Published in 1938.

The Church at the Heart of the World Christian Community. International Missionary Council, New York. 1937. 25 cents.

d Oxf.p.158 e Oxf.p.159

LESSON III-B

The Church and War[a]

Dr. William A. Visser 't Hooft, Chairman of this special section, though of Dutch birth and education, represents the Swiss Church Federation and the World's Student Christian Federation.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: Our main task is to probe the underlying sources of the evil of war, and to point to the ultimate remedy.

TO THE LEADER: The leader may want to introduce this subject in his own words or have some one appointed to introduce it for the discussion of the questions. The Oxford Conference Study Series points out that since the World War, many have been working for peace yet we are witnessing today the disintegration of the structure of peace. Two main approaches have been followed:

1. The protest of Christian Pacifism.

2. Creation of machinery through international co-operation such as sanctions, neutrality legislation, the Kellogg-Briand pact. Yet all have failed and the world is more war-minded than ever in history. Take for instance the neutrality legislation. In a crucial situation such as that of Spain or China, we seem actually to be throwing ourselves on one side or the other of the conflict. Christians must go deeper than any of these things if the Church is to abolish war.

Note that while this chapter is devoted to The Church and War, at Oxford this topic was only one of seven in the Section The Universal Church and Christian Nations. For the first six, see Oxford Report, pages 151 to 161. The outline of the Section's whole work is as follows:

1. The Present Situation.
2. The Ecumenical Church.
3. The Kingdom of God and the International Order.
4. Inherent Difficulties in the Establishment of International Order.
5. The Conditions of Peaceful Change.
6. Attempts to Organize an International Order.

The Menace of War

Knowing that multitudes are oppressed by the actual menace of war, the members of the sub-section of the Section on the Universal Church and the World of Nations, reported that they approached their subject with a profound sense of its urgency and the inadequacy of the best they could say.

Probing the underlying sources of the evil and pointing to the ultimate remedy, they took as their starting point the universal fellowship of Christians, acknowledging one Lord, whose claim transcends all other loyalties. War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in this world, and a defiance of the righteousness of God.

The search for the will of God is a matter of agonizing perplexity for the Christian whose country is involved in war. There are three

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a Oxf.pp.162 to 171

positions, (a) that war is always sin and that the Church will become a creative, regenerative and reconciling instrument for healing nations which renounce it; (b) that there are "just wars" waged against transgressors of international agreements and pacts, to be waged only if the Government concerned first submits the case of arbitration, conciliation or judgment of an international authority, or to vindicate an essential Christian principle; (c) that there are occasions when the State is the agent divinely appointed to preserve a nation from the harmful effects of anarchic and criminal tendencies amongst its members and to maintain its existence against the aggressions of its neighbors.

We do not affirm that any of these positions can be held to represent the only Christian attitude. Since the continuance of war and the spirit of war among the nations is a matter of guilt, the Church must call upon its members to confess their share in this wrong-doing and must, at all times, give "diligence to keep unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The greatest service the Church can serve the nation in which it is placed is to remain steadfast and loyal to its Lord, and to test rigorously all claims of national interest by His Gospel. In time of war, as in time of peace, it should pray not only for its own nation, but for its enemies; it should proclaim and obey the commandment of the Lord, "Love your enemies."

The Church's Witness

In considering the witness of the Church, the section submitted (a) the consideration of removing racial barriers, which dishonor the claim to ecumenical reality; (b) religious freedom, affirming the primary right to religious worship, and the converse right to refuse compliance with any form of worship unacceptable on grounds of conscience; (c) mutual church aid, implying that churches which are strong in resources should be ready to help those which are weak or in distress, anywhere through the world; (d) ecumenical education, laying the foundations for a generation of Christians who are willing to labor for a deeper understanding between the churches; (e) education for peace, in which agencies of Christian education would include a study of world problems and contemporary movements in the light of Christian truth; (f) disarmament, laying upon the Churches the duty of warning their members of the grave danger involved in the feverish and uncontrolled race for armed superiority, and insisting upon the need of limitation and progressive reduction of armaments by conference and many-sided agreements; (g) ecumenical organization, commending the efforts of movements working for the cause of national understanding through the churches, and urging that the study of the problems dealt with in this report be included in the aims of the World Council of Churches.

Questions for Discussion

1. What Christian principles does war violate?

   How can one pray for one's enemies?

2. In the event of war, what is the duty of the Church? Of the individual Christian?

3. When a country is at war, using censorship and propaganda, how can one decide intelligently whether a war is just or not? How is a "just war" to be distinguished from an unjust war?

4. When, if ever, is force justified? What should be the attitude of the State towards the "conscientious objector"?

5. What is your opinion concerning preparedness as a preventive of war? What should be the treatment of "outlaw nations"?

6. All want peace. Who has the secret?

Reference books for this lesson: The Church and War:

What Shall We Do About War? Pamphlet No. 20, World Problem Series. Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page. 96 pages, 15 cents net. Eddy & Page, 347 Madison Avenue, New York.

Between War and Peace. Florence Boeckel. Macmillan, New York.

Part Two. Edinburgh Conference

[The World Conference on Faith and Order met in Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, which is the center of the life and activity of the Church of Scotland. Adjoining and under the same roof is New College for students of theology. In the rooms of New College the sections held their meetings. The President of the Conference was the Archbishop of York, Dr. Temple. Vice-Presidents were Dr. Garvie of London (Congregationalist), Bishop Aulen (Church of Sweden), Pasteur Boegner (French Reformed), Archbishop Germanos (Greek Orthodox), and Dr. J. Ross Stevenson (Presbyterian). Canon Hodgson of Winchester was General Secretary and the Rev. Floyd Tomkins and Professor Clavier, Assistant Secretaries. Each one of the Sections had a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Reporter. The delegates were housed in the Student Hostels of Edinburgh. The morning devotional services were held in St. Giles' Cathedral, and the evening devotions in Assembly Hall. In the plenary sessions and in most section meetings English, French and German were all used.]

INTRODUCTION

The Movement Toward Unity

At Edinburgh, official representatives of 123 Churches from 45 nations gathered to see if a way could be found to the reunion of the divided Church. It was a great achievement. How did it happen? What was behind it?

We cannot now go back further into the background than 1910. During that year there gathered in Edinburgh a large and representative group of Christian leaders with the object of achieving some degree of common action in face of *the missionary task.* There was no attempt at the reunion of Christendom or to break down ecclesiastical divisions. There was, however, a sense of the need of a common understanding, and the question of organic union naturally emerged. Bishop Brent, at that time our Bishop in the Philippine Islands, was deeply stirred by inner questioning: "Why so many churches, when our Lord founded one fellowship of His disciples? Did Christ intend His followers to be united or divided?" These questions, said Bishop Brent, must be faced. That same Autumn, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church met. Bishop Brent moved the Convention to appoint a Commission which would unite with representatives of other Churches to call if possible a World Conference to consider the way to the reunion of all Christian Churches.

The World War delayed this Conference until 1927, when it met at Lausanne. This marked a great advancing step toward unity. The Christian groups represented at that Conference stated their beliefs and practices in matters of faith and order. Misunderstandings were removed. Christians came to know and respect the convictions of other Christians. Understanding of each other's tradition, however, is

not enough. Divisions cannot be healed simply by a statement of the points whereon we disagree. The next step was a Conference to confer about differences, with a view to overcoming them.

Thus out of Lausanne came the arrangements for the World Conference on Faith and Order, held in Edinburgh in 1937. In the meantime, many other questions were drawing Christians together in conference, such as World Peace, social and political problems, the Missionary Cause, etc. The work of such wide-spread union Christian Movements as the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. and the World Student Movement were another factor.

Thus unity was being evidenced among Christians in spite of their differences. That existing unity made the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences possible. The Churches could not seek union if they did not already possess some unity. Those who have nothing in common do not deplore their estrangement.

The four themes of the Conference at Edinburgh deal with theology and polity. Are these practical questions? They are, if reunion is; for they are exactly the questions which divide the Churches of the world into countless sects and denominations. The Edinburgh Conference was marked by a practical purpose from the start.

The Oxford Conference considered the question of Christian reunion from the angle of Life and Work. Edinburgh approached it from the angle of Faith and Order. The two Conferences were closely related. Oxford began with the troubles of the world and asked what the message of the Church is to our age and what the Church might do to bring relief and healing. Edinburgh began with such central truths as the essential faith of the Church and the true marks of a witnessing body able to bring deliverance. Both Conferences were marked by a compelling sense of urgency and a realization of the weakness of a divided Christian witness. The need of unity has grown out of a sense of crisis.

RECENT PROGRESS TOWARD UNITY[a]

By way of introduction, the report on the Conference submitted with thankfulness details of the progress made in the field of Church union during the ten years that have elapsed since the first great Conference on Faith and Order, held in Lausanne in 1927.

Important steps already taken: (a) specific unions or approaches to union between churches of different nations (the Anglican Communion on one side and the Old Catholic churches of Europe and the churches of the Orthodox Communion on the other). (b) Active unity movements in North America, Asia and Europe, those in non-Christian civilizations being frequently forced together by practical necessity. Conspicuous instances are the reunion of the Scottish Presbyterian churches in 1929, the English Methodists in 1932, the union of Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists in Canada in 1925, the formation of the Church of Christ in China in 1927, (this combining Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed churches, United Brethren, the United Church of Canada and

a Edin.pp.1 and 2

independent Chinese churches). In 1938 the Reformed Churches of France and the Methodist Churches of the United States of America effected mergers by almost unanimous vote. This is a great step forward.

This record does not suggest any necessity for waiting upon unions of denominational families before wider union is attempted. To be sure, inter-communion has not been widely extended during the decade; no union has been consummated between a church of radically "Catholic" and one of radically "evangelical" tradition, so that the significance of the progress made must not be overstated; still, the trend towards unity is definitely marked both in magnitude and in character.

LESSON IV-A

The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Chairman: Bishop Lehtonen, Church of Finland. Vice-Chairman, Principal Lofthouse (British Methodist). Reporter, Professor Manson, Church of Scotland.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To understand the meaning of this foundation doctrine of the Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and its bearing on the life of the individual Christian and on the corporate life of the Church in the world today.

(We can surely credit it to Grace itself that the Edinburgh Conference based its work not on abstract metaphysics about the Existence of God, but on the heart-warming experience and faith in countless lives of the Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The group of over 100 dealing with this subject had a happy experience in reaching unanimity and would not adjourn until they had sung the Doxology.)

TO THE LEADER: For most groups an introduction is necessary before they are ready to consider the study of the theological questions of the Edinburgh Conference. For that reason, we have given the background material on the previous page. By a presentation of this to the group interest can be aroused and a desire to go further in the study created.

Yet there may be in the group those who do not see the need for unity—who confuse it with a uniformity in worship, which is not a necessary part of a united church. There may be present also those who do not want unity and whose Christian experience has not yet gone deep enough to feel a sense of shame for the pride which holds us aloof from other Christians.

If the leader knows the attitudes of his group, he may speak to some on these points mentioned. For the reasons why unity is desperately needed, see the opening sermon of the Edinburgh Conference, delivered by the Rt. Rev. William Temple, Archbishop of York. A good resume of this is given in *World Chaos or World Christianity?* by Henry Smith Leiper, pages 98 to 102 (Willett, Clark & Co). The full sermon is printed on pages 15 to 23 of *The Second Conference on Faith and Order* by Leonard Hodgson (Macmillan).

(i) The Meaning of Grace

When we speak of God's grace, we think of God Himself as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ. The meaning of Divine grace is truly known only to those who know that God is Love, and that all that He does is done in love in fulfillment of His righteous purposes. His grace is manifested in our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life, but above all in our redemption through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit, in the fellowship of the Church and in the gift of the Word and Sacraments.

Man's salvation and welfare have their source in God alone, who is moved to His gracious activity towards man not by any merit on man's part, but solely by His free, out-going love.

(ii) Justification and Sanctification

God in His free and out-going love justifies and sanctifies us through Christ, and His grace thus manifested is appropriated by faith, which itself is the gift of God.

Justification and Sanctification are two inseparable aspects of God's gracious action in dealing with sinful man.

Justification is the act of God, whereby He forgives our sins and brings us into fellowship with Himself, who in Jesus Christ, and by His death upon the Cross, has condemned sin and manifested His love to sinners, reconciling the world to Himself.

Sanctification is the work of God, whereby through the Holy Spirit He continually renews us and the whole Church, delivering us from the power of sin, giving us increase in holiness, and transforming us into the likeness of His Son through participation in His death and in His risen life. This renewal, inspiring us to continual spiritual activity and conflict with evil, remains throughout the gift of God. Whatever our growth in holiness may be, our fellowship with God is always based upon God's forgiving grace.

Faith is more than intellectual acceptance of the revelation in Jesus Christ; it is whole-hearted trust in God and his promises, and committal of ourselves to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

(iii) The Sovereignty of God and Man's Response

In regard to the relation of God's grace and man's freedom, we all agree simply upon the basis of Holy Scripture and Christian experience that the sovereignty of God is supreme. By the sovereignty of God we mean His all-controlling, all-embracing will and purpose revealed in Jesus Christ for each man and for all mankind. And we wish further to insist that this eternal purpose is the expression of God's own loving and holy nature. Thus we men owe our whole salvation to His gracious will. But, on the other hand, it is the will of God that His grace should be actively appropriated by man's own will and that for such decision man should remain responsible.

Many theologians have made attempts on philosophical lines to reconcile the apparent antithesis of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility but such theories are not part of the Christian Faith.

(iv) The Church and Grace

We agree that the Church is the Body of Christ and the blessed company of all faithful people, whether in heaven or on earth, the communion of saints. It is at once the realization of God's gracious purposes in creation and redemption, and the continuous organ of God's grace in Christ by the Holy Spirit, who is its pervading life, and who is constantly hallowing all its parts.

It is the function of the Church to glorify God in its life and worship, to proclaim the Gospel to every creature, and to build up in the fellowship and life of the Spirit all believing people, of every race and nation. To this end God bestows His grace in the Church on its members through His Word and Sacraments, and in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

(v) Grace, the Word, and the Sacraments

We agree that the Word and the Sacraments are gifts of God to the Church through Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind. In both the grace of God in Christ is shown forth, given and through faith received; and this grace is one and indivisible.

The Word is the appointed means by which God's grace is made known to men, calling them to repentance, assuring them of forgiveness, drawing them to obedience and building them up in the fellowship of faith and love.

The Sacraments are not to be considered merely in themselves, but always as sacraments of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. They have their significance in the continual working of the Holy Spirit, who is the life of the Church. Through the sacraments God develops in all its members a life of perpetual communion lived within its fellowship, and thus enables them to embody His will in the life of the world; but the loving-kindness of God is not to be conceived as limited by His sacraments.

Among or within the churches represented by us there is a certain difference of emphasis placed upon the Word and the sacraments, but we agree that such a difference need not be a barrier to union.

(vi) Sola Gratia

Some Churches set great value on the expression *sola gratia,* while others avoid it. The phrase has been the subject of much controversy, but we can all join in the following statements:—Our salvation is the gift of God and the fruit of His grace. It is not based on the merit of man, but has its root and foundation in the forgiveness which God in His grace grants to the sinner whom He receives to sanctify Him. We do not, however, hold that the action of the Divine grace over-rides human freedom and responsibility; rather, it is only as response is made by faith to Divine grace that true freedom is achieved. Resistance to the appeal of God's out-going love spells, not freedom, but bondage, and perfect freedom is found only in complete conformity with the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you understand by "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

   How would you explain "grace" in the following:

   "And the child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him:"

   "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

   "By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

   "The inward and spiritual grace in Baptism is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness whereby we are made the children of grace."

   "Defend, O Lord, this thy child with thy heavenly grace."

2. Why should the Churches disagree on the doctrine of grace?

   What is the relation between faith and grace?

3. What difference does belief in the grace of God make in one's daily life?

   How does the idea of grace affect one's prayers? How is God's grace manifesting itself in China today?

4. At the Edinburgh Conference there were those who were committed to a belief in the "All Sovereign" power of God; there were also those who have been described as "activists" who place emphasis on man's ability to control his own destiny.

   How did the Conference resolve the apparent contradiction? Do you consider the answer adequate? What is the significance for the future?

Reference books for this lesson: The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

The Doctrine of Grace. Edited by W. T. Whitley, LL.D., 396 pages. Macmillan, $4.50. The essays contributed by members of the first Theological Commission, on which their report is based.

The Theology of Grace (pamphlet No. 66). A study of the theological questions associated with the doctrine of Grace. 10 cents.

Notes for the use of Section 1 of the Edinburgh Conference (pamphlet No. 88). Suggestions from the Theological Secretary as to points requiring special consideration by the Section on Grace. English, French and German. 10 cents.

All the above obtainable from Faith and Order, 111 Fifth Avenue, N. Y.

LESSON IV-B

The Church of Christ and the Word of God

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To appreciate more deeply the identity of the Word of God with His own nature; that we are meant to receive the Word above all other science and wisdom as the guiding power in our lives; that a wider heralding of the Word of God waits upon a unified church.

TO THE LEADER: Three important themes appear in the Report of this Section:

1. The Word of God.
2. The Church, Its Nature and Function.
3. The Kingdom of God.

Each theme is of such importance and interest that its consideration might well occupy the whole time of the session. The problem considered at Edinburgh was particularly in *relation* of the Church to the Word of God. This problem as well as that of the section in V-B *The Church and the Ministry and Sacraments* involves the fundamental question: What is the nature of the Church? Dr. Leiper summarizes Archbishop Temple's Edinburgh sermon on this cardinal point as follows: "To answer this question every Christian of whatever denomination would naturally turn to the biblical record which tells how our Lord, by the triumph of the cross and by the act of God in his resurrection, fashioned a new community, the people of the new covenant, who by the power of the Spirit are incorporated in the living Christ so as to be his body in the world. If this simple statement of the origin of the Christian church was accepted, it would become clear, (the Archbishop thought), that the relation of the Church to the Word of God is twofold:

First, the Church is created by the Word of God; but, second, the Church's life is itself an utterance of that Word. For the Word of God is a fount of fellowship, even as fellowship is the characteristic manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Consequently redemption is from the antagonisms of the world into the fellowship of disciples; and this is the Church. That is why the Church—the fellowship of the redeemed—is part of its own message and even appears in the Creed as an object of its own faith. This, after all, is only another way of saying that true love of God must needs unite us in love for one another."—From *World Chaos or World Christianity,* pages 115, 116.

(i) The Word of God

The Word of God[a], living, dynamic and inseparable from God's activity, is manifested in the words, deeds, life, character, suffering, death and resurrection of Christ our Lord, and culminates in the gift of the Spirit and in the life which He gives to His body, the Church.

(ii) Holy Scripture and Tradition

Holy Scripture[b] is a testimony in *words* of the revelation uttered by the *Word.* Thus Holy Scripture affords the primary norm for the

a Edin.p.4 col.1 b Edin.p.4 col.2

Church's teaching, worship and life. We are convinced that scientific research cannot shake this conception of the revelation; but freedom should not be denied research that can render the Church important service in bringing about a right interpretation of the Scriptures.

(iii) The Church: Our Common Faith

The Church is the household of God[c], the family in which the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are to be realized in the children of His adoption. Christ is present in His Church through the Holy Spirit as Prophet, Priest and King. His presence, perpetual since the foundation of the Church, is made effective in the preaching of the Word, the faithful administration of the Sacraments, in prayer offered in His name and through the newness of life whereby He enables the faithful to bear witness to Himself.

(iv) The Church: Agreements and Differences

In considering agreements and differences[d] in the Church, all are of one mind, that it is the sphere of redemption; apart from it, man cannot normally attain full knowledge of God nor worship Him in truth. Differences lie in the use of the term "church." Some apply it not only to the visible, redeemed, and redemptive community, but also to the invisible company of redeemed. Others regard the use of the term "church" with reference to the invisible company as misleading and unscriptural. We all, however, recognize that the company of those whom God has brought into newness of life and joy in the Holy Ghost, and who have made personal response to the forgiving love of God, has limits hidden from human vision and known only to God.

Different views are held, too, as to the basis of Church membership. Some hold that all who have been baptized and have repudiated their heritage are to be regarded as members of the Church; others would confine membership to those who have made an open profession of faith in Christ and in whose lives some measure of the spirit of Christ may be discerned.

(v) The Church and the Kingdom of God

Considering the *Church and the Kingdom of God*[e], the latter now realized only in veiled form, it was pointed out that some lay emphasis on the actual presence of the Kingdom within the Church and the continuity of the two, others lay emphasis on the Kingdom that is to come in glory, while others think of the Kingdom as the ever-increasing reign of the righteousness and the love of God manifested by Jesus Christ in every realm of life.

In some churches these differing conceptions are felt to be of great moment, in others they are held side by side without interfering with complete communion.

(vi) The Function of the Church

The Function of the Church[f] is to glorify God and to be His missionary. She is to intercede for all her members, to proclaim the righteousness of God, to do battle against the powers of evil and to seek the glory of God above all things, looking to the day when His Kingdom shall come in the fulness of its power.

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c Edin.p.5 col.1 d Edin.p.5 col.2 e Edin.p.6 col.1 f Edin.p.6 col.2

(vii) The Gift of Prophecy and the Ministry of the Word

The Gift of Prophecy and the Ministry of the Word[g] include the revelation of God given to us by inspired men who have recorded and preached it in every age. At the same time, all manifestations of the Spirit are manifestations of God's divine activity; therefore, the Spirit may speak by whomsoever He wills; the Church greatly needs, and should both expect and welcome, the exercise of gifts of prophecy and teaching by laity, both men and women.

(viii) "Una Sancta" and Our Divisions

We, who confess our faith in one Church[h], though conscious of the cleavage between that faith and the conditions of the present time, have a supernatural bond of oneness which subsists in spite of divergencies in defining the divine mystery of the Lord, and this sense of kinship is undoubtedly drawing Christians nearer to each other, and a foretaste of full fellowship between severed communions is even now being sought and found.

"But we believe that the divisions of Christendom in every land are such as to hamper the manifestations of the unity of Christ's body. We deplore this with all our hearts; and we desire the conference to summon members of the churches to such penitence that not only their leaders, but the ordinary men and women who hear their message, may learn that the cause of Christian unity is implicit in God's word, and should be treated by the Christian conscience as an urgent call from God.—*Edinburgh Report,* page 7.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do most people understand by "the Word of God"?

   How do you consider that the tradition of the Church is related to Holy Scripture?

2. What is the distinction between "the Church" and "Churches"?

   Why need the distinction be made?

3. Do you think of the Church and the Kingdom of God as identical?

   If not, what relation do they bear to one another in your thinking?

4. "The function of the Church is to glorify God in adoration and sacrificial service and to be God's missionary to the world."

   What are the difficulties a divided Church finds in fulfilling this function?

For further help on this lesson see *The Church and the Word of God,* pamphlet No. 87. A study of the doctrine of the Word, so prominent in Lutheran theology. 10 cents. Obtainable from Faith & Order Headquarters.

Also *The Church and Its Function in Society* by W. A. Visser 't Hooft and J. H. Oldham. Willett, 1937.

g Edin.p.7 col.1 h Edin.p.7 col.2

LESSON V-A

The Communion of Saints[a]

This was the work of a special section of 17 persons including the Orthodox Patriarch Eulogius, Dr. Bulgakov, Dr. Gavin, Dr. Willard Sperry, Dr. Gaius J. Slosser, with the Bishop of Gibraltar, Chairman, and the Archdeacon of Monmouth, Wales, Secretary. It was of sufficient importance to merit a special chapter in the report of the Conference. Dr. John R. Mott stated he thought this subject was the most important one considered at Edinburgh and that it had been too long neglected by Protestant churches. Dr. Sperry of the Harvard Theological School confessed, not without emotion, that though at some time he might have doubted many articles of the Creed, he had never been able to doubt the Communion of Saints.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To explore the bearing of this truth upon personal and devotional life—and its unifying power in the Church and world.

TO THE LEADER: The subject of this Report plays a large part in the faith and practice of many Chrisitan Communions, notably the Eastern Orthodox Churches. It was not discussed at Lausanne, and the Orthodox representatives had urged that it be considered at Edinburgh. A committee had in the meantime been making a study of it and had prepared a valuable volume on the subject entitled, "The Communion of Saints."

The drafting of the Report gave as much trouble as any other. The subject was recognized as a Scriptural conception, yet while some members of the Conference came from Churches which held it to be of great importance, others represented groups which practically ignored it and even regarded it with distrust because of historical associations.

The Report in the main is a statement of the different views held by Christians of the meaning of the phrase "the Communion of Saints." The Report represents a first stage in the discussion of this subject as were other topics at Lausanne in 1927. If we are to get nearer agreement in the future, it is incumbent upon Christian people to study this theme.

We use the term "communion of saints" as meaning that all who are "in Christ" are knit together in one fellowship through the Holy Spirit. This conception, which is found repeatedly in the Scriptures, occurs as a phrase of the Apostles' Creed, and gives expression to a precious truth for all Christians. With some, the phrase is regarded as synonymous with the Holy Catholic Church. For others, it expresses a quality of the Church which is realized only in so far as its members mutually share all the blessings which God bestows. For others, it is the description of a quality of life in those who are in grace. The communion of saints is not always regarded as co-extensive with the Church. For the Orthodox and certain other Churches and individual believers it means fellowship not only with living and departed Christians but also with the holy angels, and, in a very special sense, with the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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a Edin.pp.7 to 9

In this connection the way in which we should understand the words "all generations shall call me blessed" was considered. No agreement was reached, and the subject requires further study.

The words "the communion of saints" express certain well-defined phases of the Christian Gospel and of the doctrine of the Church.

In the New Testament the word "saints" is applied to all the baptized. The term is further applied to the patriarchs, prophets, or martyrs of the Old Covenant and to those who, believing in Christ, laid down their lives for Him before they could receive baptism. In every case, the saints are those who are devoted to God, who yield themselves as instruments to His sovereign will. They are saints, not by virtue of their own merits, but through the forgiving grace and love of God.

There are Churches which hold that the communion is not as between individuals as such, but as between those who are being sanctified by God in His Church. Their unity is not merely the sum total of individuals, but it is a spiritual solidarity which has reality only in so far as they are in Christ, and thereby in His Church.

There are also those who interpret the word *"hagion"* as neuter as well as masculine. For them the phrase means sharing in holy things, i.e., the means of grace. They emphasize right relations to holy things as the principal mark of the holiness of the faithful.

There are others who regard the Word of God and the Holy Spirit as the sole source of the communion of saints, and at the same time would emphasize righteousness and holiness of life. They would also stress the sacredness and value of the individual's personality. While doing so, they would guard against the evils resulting from an over-emphasized individualism by insisting on the corporate nature of the fellowship in Christ. Since the term "saints" is almost always in the plural in the Scriptures, so it is believed that there is no true sainthood apart from the saintly community.

We are agreed that the communion of saints most certainly involves the mutual sharing of both spiritual and temporal blessings on the part of all living Christians. We believe that this mutual sharing should transcend all racial, political, social and denominational barriers, in the spirit of Gethsemane and the Cross. Such for example, is the fellowship of those associated in any truly Christian œcumenical movement. Therein we have experienced a very real, though not complete, communion of saints. Therein we humbly believe we experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Any conception of the communion of saints which is confined to the Church on earth alone is defective. Many further see in the communion of saints an affirmation of the unbroken communion between the living and departed in Christ. They believe themselves to be in communion with the departed and express this in their worship. They rejoice to think that there is a growing consciousness among Christians of nearness to the redeemed in the unseen world, refusing to believe that death severs the communion of those on earth with those departed.

For some, it is sufficient to leave their departed ones with God, being linked with them through Christ. Others regard it as a Christian

privilege and duty to pray for the departed. Still others, conscious of the living presence, guardianship and help of the saints, ask their prayers before God.

We all agree that we ought to remember with thankfulness those who as followers of Christ witnessed a good confession in their day and generation, thereby winning victories for Christ and His Kingdom.

Questions for Discussion

1. What does the "Communion of Saints" mean to you? How would you explain the phrase to one who did not understand?
2. Who and where are the saints who are in Communion?
3. What significance has the belief in the Communion of Saints for Church Unity?

   What social value is inherent in it? What importance for the missionary movement?
4. "Any conception of the Communion of Saints which is confined to the Church on earth alone is defective." Do you agree?

   Why do some Christians believe in prayers for the departed while others do not? What do you believe?

For further help in this subject see *The Communion of Saints,* pamphlet No. 83. The relation of the Church Visible and Invisible. Harper. 40 cents. Obtainable from Faith & Order headquarters.

See also *The Communion of Saints,* edited by G. J. Slosser. Harper & Bros., New York.

LESSON V-B

The Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments

Chairman: Dr. W. M. Baillie, Church of Scotland. Vice-Chairman, Dr. Hamilcar Alivisatos, Greek Orthodox Church. Reporter, Dr. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To prepare our minds and hearts so that we (and not only the ecumenical leaders) shall be working at the solution of this most difficult part of the problem of unity.

TO THE LEADER:

[NOTE: At this point—on the Ministry—the Conference reached what will for long be the thorniest and most difficult subject. Still, noticeable progress was made in the mutual clarification and charitable approach which each grand division of separation—Orthodox, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational—made to each other. The text of the report itself must be studied carefully to understand the very qualified action taken. Note the tone of the closing words, "we are alike called of God to pray and to labor by every means for the promotion of this common aim"—(an unbroken order of ministry) "recognizing that the future or ultimate form to be assumed by the united Church must depend not only on the experience of the past, but above all upon the continued direction of the Holy Spirit." For the varying views see page 12 and 13 of the Edinburgh Report.]

(i) Authority for, and (ii) Nature of the Sacraments

The authority for the sacramental doctrine and order[a] is based on the belief that, according to the evidence of the New Testament, the sacraments which they accept were instituted by Christ Himself. They are Christ's gift to His Church, outward and visible signs of His invisible grace. Protestant churches accept only two sacraments,—Baptism and the Eucharist; the Anglican Church, not strictly defining the number, gives these two a pre-eminent position; the Orthodox Church of several Eastern countries, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, hold that there are seven; the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army observe no sacraments in the usual sense of the term.

(iii) The Number of the Sacraments

Most of us agree that the question of the number of the sacraments[b] should not be regarded as a dividing line when we strive to attain a united Church.

(iv) The Validity of the Sacraments

Considering the *validity* of the sacraments[c], it was recorded that, although it is the duty of a church to make sure that sacraments should be performed regularly and canonically, yet no judgment should be pronounced by any church denying the "validity" of the sacraments performed by any Christian church which believes itself to be observing what Christ appointed for His Church. Every sacrament should be so ordered that all may recognize in it an act performed on behalf of the universal Church, the ministry being ordained for this administration.

(v) Baptism

Baptism[d] is a gift of God's redeeming love to the Church, a sign and seal of discipleship in obedience to our Lord's command. Disagreement existed in the discussion of such points as baptismal regeneration, the admission of unbaptized persons to the Holy Communion and the relation of Confirmation to Baptism; it is not therefore possible to conclude how far such disagreements would constitute obstacles to proposals for a united Church.

(vi) The Eucharist

Discussion on *the Eucharist*[e] brought out differences of opinion as to how Christ's presence is manifested and realized in the breaking of the "bread." The important thing is, however, that we should celebrate the Eucharist with the unfailing use of bread and wine, and of prayer, and of the words of the institution, and with agreements as to its essential and spiritual meaning. The presence, which we do not try to define, is a spiritual presence.

(vii) The Ministry

For a common understanding of the nature and functions of *the Ministry*[f], the Conference adopted the following statements: (a) that the ministry was instituted by Jesus Christ and is a gift of God to the Church in the service of the Word and sacraments; (b) that this ministry does not exclude the "royal priesthood" to which all Christians

a Ed.p.9 b Ed.p.10 col.1 c Ed.p.10 col.2 d Ed.p.11 e Ed.p.11 f Ed.pp.12 to 14

are called as the redeemed of Jesus Christ; (c) that ordination is by prayer and laying-on of hands; (d) that it is essential to a united Church that there be a universally recognized ministry.

Though there are differences in the belief in Apostolic Succession —that handing down and preserving the Apostles' doctrine—every Church treasures that particular acceptance of the doctrine to which they tie their faith.

Questions for Discussion

1. How far does the report indicate agreement among the Churches on the sacraments?
2. What are the difficulties in the way of complete agreement with certain groups, for example—with the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army?
3. How much agreement is there among the Churches on Baptism and the Holy Communion?

   How would you account for the disagreements?

   How far do you think the disagreements should constitute obstacles to a united Church?
4. How important is the question of the ministry in the movement toward unity?

   Do you consider the historic ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons as essential to the order of a united Church?

   Why, or why not?

For further help see *The Ministry and Sacraments,* pamphlet No. 81. A study of these related subjects, historically and theologically. 10 cents, from Faith & Order Headquarters.

LESSON VI-A

The Church's Unity in Life and Worship

Chairman: Rev. Dr. M. E. Aubrey (British Baptist). Vice-Chairman, Dr. Francis Cho Min Wei of China (Anglican). Reporter, Dr. Willard L. Sperry (Congregational) of Harvard University.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To investigate the several conceptions of Church Unity, the obstacles to unity, and the steps we can take toward the goal of Church Unity.

TO THE LEADER: What kind of a unity should we seek? Spiritual unity is necessary and must exist before organic unity. This already exists and is growing.

Edinburgh, however, declared spiritual unity is not enough. A point to emphasize is that even organic Christian unity is not an end in itself. It is to be a means to a further end, i.e. "that the world may believe."

(i) Our Premise and Our Goal

Our goal is to realize the ideal of the Church as one living body, worshipping and serving God in Christ, as the fulfillment of our Lord's prayers and ours.

(ii) The Several Conceptions of Church Unity

Growing spiritual unity, understanding and respect[a] of Christians for one another, are the foundation for the achievement of visible Church Unity. *Co-operative action* consisting of Church "federation" are the most common expressions of such unity, and promising approach to its more complete forms. *Intercommunion*[b] is the fullest expression of mutual recognition between two or more Churches. *Corporate Union*[c] should not be taken to involve rigid uniformity; rather the unity of a living organism, with the diversity characteristics of the members of a healthy body. Life can come only from life; the visible unity of the Body of Christ can issue only from the Living God through the work of the life-giving Spirit.

(iii) The Forms of Likeness Basic for Church Unity

The forms of likeness basic for Church unity[d] would involve such essential unity in faith as would find expression in: (a) the revelation of God contained in the Holy Scriptures; (b) acknowledgment of the Apostles' and Nicene creeds; (c) belief in the guidance of God's Holy Spirit and the manifestation of the presence of the living Christ in the Church; the seeking of the continued guidance of the Spirit of the Living God.

Likeness in non-sacramental worship[e] is not necessary for co-operative union. All are united in the use of the Holy Scriptures and in common prayer. In this worship we all stand before God in adoration of His majesty, bringing to Him our own needs and those of our fellows, dedicating ourselves to His service and the service of all mankind.

Likeness in Sacramental Faith and Practice[f] are not required in co-operative activities. It is agreed, however, that for full corporate communion it will be necessary to reconcile the differences between churches which insist, some upon two sacraments, some upon seven, some upon no sacraments whatever.

Likeness of Orders as a Basis for Unity[g], though lacking, is no obstacle to co-operative action. For full intercommunion and corporate union it will be necessary to reconcile the differences between churches which uphold: (a) the threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons; (b) the essential character of the historic Episcopate; (c) the belief that distinction between bishops and presbyters is not essential; (d) the belief that no specially ordained ministry is required.

Likeness in Polity as a Basis for Unity[h] is likewise not necessary for co-operative action. We recognize that differing systems of Church government must all, under conditions which require study, have an appropriate place in the order of life of a reunited Church.

(iv) Obstacles to Church Unity

Obstacles to Church Unity[i] (restricted to "Faith" and "Order") are encountered in connection with a form of Church government or worship which is considered a part of the faith. There is on one hand the insistence of a divine givenness in the Scriptures, in orders, in creeds and worship. On the other hand, there is an equally strong insistence

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a Edin.p.14 b Edin.p.15 c Edin.p.15 d Edin.pp.15-16 e Edin.p.16 f Edin.p.16 g Edin.p.17 h Edin.p.17 i Edin.p.17

upon the individual experience of divine grace, in which freedom is enjoyed as a religious right and enjoined as a religious duty. While not minimizing the difficulties presented by these contrasted types, it is our hope and prayer that, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they may be overcome. We must attempt by study to enter more sympathetically into the experience of others, and to "keep the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace."

Obstacles[j] not restricted to "Faith" and "Order" include: (a) those which are presented by a national church which hallows the common life of its people, but which is exposed to exclusive provincialism by a secular state; (b) obstacles due to historic factors, such as the separation existing in the Near and Middle East, where religious isolation is due to loyalty to an ancient heritage of early Christian times; (c) obstacles of "cultural" origin, including the attitude of churches kept apart by barriers of nationality, race, class, general culture and more particularly, by slothful self-content and self-sufficiency.

(v) What Can We Do to Move Toward the Unity We Should Seek

In moving towards unity[k], we should seek: (a) *wider knowledge,* in which regard the launching and conducting of an adequate educational program is advocated. It is hoped that this booklet will contribute towards that end; both religious and secular press will, it is hoped, give systematic attention to current ecumenical developments; (b) *theological education,* which will include the provision of instruction of the future ministry in all that pertains to the drawing together of the various Christian communions; (c) *cultivation of the spirit of unity,* fostering such attitudes and spiritual experience as will lead to the desire for unity; (d) *research groups,* such societies as already exist in some countries,—theologians and other scholars who make a study of ecumenical problems; (e) *special times of prayer,* such as Whitsunday or any one Sunday in the year, in which prayers for the ecumenical movement will be offered; (f) *mutual Church aid,* offering help to suffering or weaker churches; (g) *spiritual preparation,* for which organizing and participating in efforts of evangelism in cooperation, in which the viewpoints and distinctive characteristics of the different units are given sympathetic consideration; (i) *fellowships of unity,* now springing up in various parts of the world, should be increased, thus adding to a clearer understanding of each other's modes and experiences of worship; (j) *regional conferences,* consisting of intimate consultations, of retreats, of Church leaders or other specialized groups; (k) *youth movements,* stimulated by the growing interest in the ecumenical movement being shown by Christian youth organizations; (l) *increase of intercourse,* encouraging exchange of membership, interchange of pulpits and inter-communion; (m) *plans for Church union,* recommending standing commissions for the study of ecumenical questions and for fostering mutually helpful relations with other communions; (n) *needs of special areas,* (new committees or locations where there has been a sudden increase of population) calling for united action on the part of the churches to set up commissions to

j Edin.p.18 k Edin.pp.18 to 22

review, recommend and guide the location of new churches; (o) *territorial and ecumenical unity,* in which unity of churches within a certain area should not interfere with a sense of ecumenical relationship with nationally instituted churches; (p) *the older and younger churches,* recommending that the older churches place at the disposal of younger ones the benefit of their experience in matters of doctrine, worship and order, while recognizing that both should be free to follow the leading Spirit of God as it is apprehended by them; (q) *the Council of Churches* approved at the Oxford Conference, to conserve the distinctive character and value of each of the movements represented in the two Conferences, freedom to be exercised in the formation of special committees, but the churches coming together on the basis of the doctrine of the Incarnation.

Questions for Discussion

1. Upon what grounds should we encourage co-operation among Christians at this stage?

   Is co-operation a substitute for unity?

   Do you believe inter-communion should be regarded as a means of attaining or symbolizing unity, or that it should be deferred until complete unity has been realized?
2. What seem to you to be the greatest obstacles to unity?
3. What are the principal differences between the Christian groups in your community?
4. "Our goal is to realize the ideal of the Church as one living body, worshipping and serving God in Christ, as the fulfillment of our Lord's prayers and of our prayers."

   What concrete steps towards this goal can you take in your community?

   Consider *Ten Steps Toward Unity* on page 47 of this book.

Reference books for this lesson: The Church's Unity in Life and Worship:

The Meaning of Unity. (Pamphlet No. 82). A constructive study of the relation of co-operation, federation, corporate union, etc., to the ideal of Christian Unity. Harper. 40 cents.

Next Steps on the Road to a United Church. (Pamphlet No. 85). Practical suggestions for more effective expressions of existing unity and for further progress. Harper. 40 cents.

LESSON VI-B

World Council of Churches

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY: To understand what the proposed World Council is, and to estimate its value.

By the action of both the Oxford Conference on Life and Work and the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order a proposal for a "World Council of Churches," uniting the interests of the two movements in a single representative body, is being submitted to the churches of the world for their official approval. If the plan is consummated, it will mark a new stage in Christian history, for there will then come into being a world-wide council directly representing the great bodies of non-Roman Christianity and continuously functioning in co-operative tasks in their behalf. For the first time since the Reformation the churches will possess a structure which will enable them to act unitedly on a world scale.

The plan contemplates a World Council of Churches functioning through a General Assembly of representatives appointed directly by the co-operating churches and meeting every five years. There will be a central committee, likewise representative of the churches, meeting annually as the executive of the General Assembly. The Council would have "no power to legislate for the churches or to commit them to action without their consent."

In endorsing the plan in principle, the Oxford and the Edinburgh Conferences each appointed seven persons, creating a "Constituent Committee of Fourteen," which is charged with the responsibility of completing the details, submitting the proposal to the churches and, when it has been approved by the churches, convening the World Council. The following outline is a description of the general structure of the proposed World Council:

The World Council of Churches shall function through

(1) a General Assembly
(2) a Central Committee
(3) a Commission for Faith and Order
(4) a Commission for Life and Work

1. (a) The General Assembly shall consist of not less than 200 members, being official representatives of the churches elected by them . . .

(b) The Assembly shall have no power to legislate for the churches or to commit them to action without their consent. Its deliverances shall carry its own authority and no other, except so far as they may be ratified by the churches. It shall make provision for the expression of the views of minorities, and in all matters of common interest to the churches pertaining to their Faith and Order shall proceed in accordance with the basis on which the two World Conferences on Faith and Order have been called.

(c) Its primary functions, to be discharged by itself or through the Central Committee, shall be:

To provide for the work entrusted to the Commissions for Life and Work and for Faith and Order.

To promote co-operation among the churches in study and thought.

To promote the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the churches.

To make it easier for the churches to act together.

To consider the establishment of an ecumenical journal.

To establish communication with Christian movements on a world-scale and enter into such association with them as it deems wise.

To call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion requires.

2. The Central Committee shall be constituted as the General Assembly may determine and perform such functions as the General Assembly may entrust to it.

Utrecht, 1938

The Committee of 14 referred to above (seven appointed by the Oxford Conference and seven by the Edinburgh Conference) together with official representatives of the various churches from many countries met at Utrecht, Netherlands, in May, 1938, and agreed on the creation of a World Council of Churches. A draft of a proposed plan for this World Council was drawn up to be submitted to the churches for approval. A provisional committee of 28 was appointed, consisting of the original committee of 14 and their alternates which is to serve as a Continuation Committee to insure the continuance of Faith and Order and Life and Work until the World Council has come into existence.

A more significant step was taken when a doctrinal base was adopted to be submitted to the churches. It is "a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior."

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think of the plan for a World Council of Churches? Is it practicable? Is it desirable?

2. What is likely to be the effect of such a Council?
   To what extent will it be helpful in furthering the cause of Unity?
   Is there any danger that it will delay Unity by obscuring the need for it?

3. What will be the historical significance of such a Council?
   What will be its value in making decisions on social questions?

4. In how many and in what ways have the two Conferences aided the cause of Christian Unity?

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONFERENCES

Foremost is the significance of the *mere assembling* of such Conferences. More than anything said or done is the fact that they were. This in itself is a vivid demonstration of the vitality of the Church. It possesses the vigor and the cohesiveness to gather together from all over the world men and women who are eager to face the responsibilities of the Church in this critical time.

Next is the *unity* which these Conferences have revealed. More than many had anticipated, the delegates were drawn together in Christ. Their common relationship to Him was found to have greater power than any divisive influences which might have separated them. They made the happy discovery that the things which united were far greater than the things which divided. They made the further discovery that the faith which they held in common was broad enough to support a growing Christian fellowship.

The spiritual standards which the Conferences have set for Christians everywhere are another factor to be noted. The delegates approached their task with a deep humility born of the consciousness that as individuals and as churches they had failed to measure up to the demands of the Christian Gospel. The note of penitence was frequently sounded, and pride and self-sufficiency were far in the background. Accompanying this was a profound trust in God. His purposes remained; and from everlasting to everlasting, He was still God. Growing out of this trust in God was faith in Christ. His sufficiency for both individual and social life was a central conviction around which the thinking of the Conferences moved.

The official statements of the Conferences are challenging. They are the fruit of intensive work by the delegates; and though limited in a measure by the pressure under which they were drawn up, are a compendium of Christian thought on great issues which has already made a deep impression. They contain a wealth of wisdom and the drive of a passion to have the church adequately fulfill its mission to contemporary life. They lay upon every Christian the responsibility of understanding them, and of embodying their truth in the thought and life of the world.

The Conferences reached a high point of vision in the action looking toward a *World Council of Churches*. Both gatherings approved in principle the plan for such an organization; and a Committee of Fourteen was appointed to bring it into being. At a meeting in Holland in May, 1938, the detailed plan was formulated; and after approval by the Continuation Committee of Faith and Order, the churches were invited to constitute the Council. Such a forward step

in Christian co-operation means that a new and visible organ of unity will have come into being just when it is most urgently needed in a disintegrating world.

The total effect of the Conferences will be to stimulate immeasurably the whole ecumenical movement. In a new way, the Church is finding itself. Its universal character is growing in the consciousness of clergy and laity the world over; and the Conferences have given strong impetus to this development. It remains for this new understanding to be embodied, not only in the World Council but also in a larger Christian co-operation among individuals, congregations, and communions, and in a philosophy of the Church which will undergird such co-operation and lead to an effective oneness in Christ.—Deane Edwards.

TEN STEPS TOWARD UNITY

1. Strive to overcome the tendency of "condescending" to, or casting slights upon communions separated from your own.
2. Work constantly to reconcile conflicts within your own Church.
3. Show genuine friendship and co-operation with other Christians.
4. Inform yourself of further progress and plans of the Ecumenical Movement.
5. Seek to make your parish conscious of the need for Christian Unity and the steps now being taken toward that goal.
6. Promote and co-operate with inter-church or community study of this subject.
7. Attend a Summer (or week-end) conference where this topic will be studied.
8. See that this subject is brought before the Church School and Young People's Group.
9. The Sunday Congregation to be informed and inspired through sermons.
10. Above all make Unity a subject of your daily prayer.

A valuable pamphlet is: *Ways of Strengthening the Unity of the Church in America.* 10 cents. This (and most of the literature referred to) can be obtained from the Joint Office of Life & Work and Faith & Order, 297—4th Ave., New York.

AFFIRMATION OF UNITY

(Adopted by unanimous standing vote at Edinburgh, August 18, 1937)

We are one in faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God. We are one in allegiance to Him as Head of the Church, and as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We are one in acknowledging that this allegiance takes precedence of any other allegiance that may make claims upon us.

This unity does not consist in the agreement of our minds or the consent of our wills. It is founded in Jesus Christ Himself, Who lived, died and rose again to bring us to the Father, and Who through the Holy Spirit dwells in His Church. We are one because we are all the objects of the love and grace of God, and called by Him to witness in all the world to His glorious gospel.

Our unity is of heart and spirit. We are divided in the outward forms of our life in Christ, because we understand differently His will for His Church. We believe, however, that a deeper understanding will lead us towards a united apprehension of the truth as it is in Jesus.

We humbly acknowledge that our divisions are contrary to the will of Christ, and we pray God in His mercy to shorten the days of our separation and to guide us by His Spirit into fulness of unity.

We are thankful that during recent years we have been drawn together; prejudices have been overcome, misunderstandings removed, and real, if limited, progress has been made towards our goal of a common mind.

In this Conference we may gratefully claim that the Spirit of God has made us willing to learn from one another, and has given us a fuller vision of the truth and enriched our spiritual experience.

We have lifted up our hearts together in prayer; we have sung the same hymns; together we have read the same Holy Scriptures. We recognize in one another, across the barriers of our separation, a common Christian outlook and a common standard of values. We are therefore assured of a unity deeper than our divisions.

We are convinced that our unity of spirit and aim must be embodied in a way that will make it manifest to the world, though we do not yet clearly see what outward form it should take.

We believe that every sincere attempt to co-operate in the concerns of the Kingdom of God draws the severed communions together in increased mutual understanding and good-will. We call upon our fellow-Christians of all communions to practice such co-operation; to consider patiently occasions of disunion that they may be overcome; to be ready to learn from those who differ from them; to seek to remove these obstacles to the furtherance of the gospel in the non-Christian world which arise from our divisions; and constantly to pray for that unity which we believe to be our Lord's will for His Church.

We desire also to declare to all men everywhere our assurance that Christ is the one hope of unity for the world in face of the distractions and dissensions of this present time. We know that our witness is weakened by our divisions. Yet we are one in Christ and in the fellowship of His Spirit. We pray that everywhere, in a world divided and perplexed, men may turn to Jesus Christ our Lord, Who makes us one in spite of our divisions; that He may bind in one those who by many worldly claims are set at variance; and that the world may at last find peace and unity in Him; to Whom be glory for ever.

[To the Leader: This affirmation is a precious Christian document. We suggest that it is worthy of being read aloud and then discussed by paragraphs. Analyze and discuss any point to which members of your group may not agree. Be on guard against too easy an agreement.]

Episcopal-Presbyterian Approach

Mutual Declaration from Both Sides

A notable step toward Unity has been taken since the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences of 1937. The General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in October, 1937, and the Presbyterian General Assembly in June, 1938, made the following identical declaration:

"The two churches, one in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, recognizing the holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith, accepting the two Sacraments ordained by Christ, and believing that the visible unity of Christ's church is the will of God, hereby solemnly declare their purpose to achieve organic union."

Commissions from these supreme governing bodies of the two communions were authorized to confer on the problem of reunion. The commissions have drawn up:

Two Official Documents

I. A Statement on Reunion which includes:
   1. Things believed in common.
   2. Things which might be undertaken in common.

II. Another proposal contained in a separate document prepared in the form of a Concordat. This document does not go into the larger question of the union of the two communions but deals with a local situation and is armed to meet a specific need.

These Proposals Only Tentative

The proposals in these two statements are not a fixed and final expression of the mind of either the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A. or the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. They are, as one of our bishops has said, "preliminary statements of basic agreement, put forth in honesty of spirit and against a background of fervent prayer, to be used as a means of securing wider and deeper agreement in the years to come. Out of these wider and deeper agreements, not out of the particular form of words now before us, complete unity between the two churches will finally be achieved."

How to Approach This Opportunity

Action on the proposals or on any other matters involving reunion between the two churches will not be hastily taken. Union will not be advocated before the churches have studied the matter thoroughly. There are difficult questions involved. We hope the entire membership of the two churches involved will approach the study of these thorny points in the fine spirit of prayer, faith, sympathy and understanding which marked the meetings of the official groups which have submitted the proposals of the statements they have agreed upon. It is a

matter of deep thanksgiving and encouragement to us all that a measure of agreement has already been reached but even more can we thank God for the fixed purpose of both churches "to achieve reunion."

Bishop Parsons' Counsel

Let us heed the words of the Chairman of our Commission on Approaches to Unity, Bishop Parsons: "What we want now is two things—study and increased fellowship. We ask each church to study the proposals and the principles on which they are based. We ask the members of each church, clergy and laity, not only to study the proposals but also to learn more about each other and to get to know each other better."

It is to help us in the first of these two important steps that we print the following *Proposed Statement on Reunion* and the *Proposed Concordat*:

THE STATEMENT AND THE CONCORDAT

[*At a meeting of the commission representing the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A., held at the General Theological Seminary, New York, on October 27 and 28, the following Proposed Statement and Proposed Concordat were adopted:*]

THE PROPOSED STATEMENT

I. Things Believed in Common

1. The conferring churches find themselves agreed in their acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing the Word of God, and furnishing the supreme standard of faith and morals; in the belief that these scriptures ought to be placed within the reach of all men freely; and in the assurance that within a Catholic fellowship there is room for diversity of interpretation.

2. They are agreed that the faith and doctrine of the church should be set forth in acknowledged standards; accordingly they reverence the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as classified declarations of that faith and doctrine, which have served to unite the church universal on a common basis of scriptural truth and fact and to protect it from fundamental error; and they recognize as historic expressions of the Christian faith as they have severally received it later formulations (such as the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession of Faith) which were evoked by later needs.

3. Endorsing the agreed form of its presentation which was issued by the Lausanne Conference in 1927, they rejoice to declare as the divine instrument of individual and social regeneration the same Gospel of God's grace:

"The Gospel is the joyful message of redemption, both here and hereafter, the gift of God to sinful man in Jesus Christ. Through His life and Teaching, His call to repentance, His proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God and of judgment, His suffering and Death, His resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and by the mission of the Holy Spirit, He has brought to us forgiveness of sins, and has revealed the fulness of the living God and His boundless love toward us. Because He Himself is the Gospel, the Gospel is the message of the church to the world. . . . It proclaims the only way by which humanity can escape from those class and race hatreds which devastate society at present into the enjoyment of national well-being and international friendship and peace. It is also a gracious invitation to the non-Christian world, East and West, to enter into the joy of the living Lord."

4. The conferring churches are as one in acknowledging that the sacra-

ments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are divinely instituted as effectual signs and seals of the saving grace of God, and that through them members are admitted, renewed and strengthened within the Body of Christ to form one fellowship in Him of life and service in believing and thankful dependence upon His Spirit.

5. They are agreed that the Ministry is the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Church; that in accordance with His purpose it is a ministry not of any section of the Church but of the Church Universal; that He calls to this sacred service whom He wills; and that admission to it is through prayer and the laying on of hands by persons commissioned thereto, in the faith that God will bestow enabling grace on those whom He has called through His Son.

6. They are agreed in the faith that the church is grounded not in the will of man but in the eternal will of God, who gathers men into a fellowship rooted in Christ and sustained by the power of His Spirit; that the life of the church is a life of worship towards God, of growth in grace and of service to mankind; and that the church is charged with a Divine mission to bear witness to Christ and to proclaim to the whole world the Gospel of the redeeming grace of God through Him.

7. They are agreed in holding that the inward unity of believers in Christ, the one Head of the church, ought to be made visible in a common church life and fellowship; and they together acknowledge the obligation to seek and promote the visible unity of the church wherever the pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's appointment.

8. They are agreed in holding that the church manifests its continuity from age to age and throughout the world as one body of which Christ is the Head; that it comprehends within the unity of its essential faith varying forms of devotion, service and thought; and that it is called, within its own spiritual sphere, to own allegiance to its Lord alone.

9. They are agreed in recognizing the sovereign right of the Lord Jesus Christ to govern human life and conduct in every sphere, and they seek with united purpose the submission of His mind not only of the ecclesiastical order, but of the whole ordered life of mankind, domestic, public, national, and international, and its direction by the light and power of the Holy Spirit.

II. Things That Might be Undertaken in Common

We recommend:

1. That inasmuch as the conferring churches appeal to the same scriptures and profess the same creeds, appropriate measures be taken to secure, on a regular basis approved by the authorities concerned, the mutual admission to pulpits, as occasion serves, of the ministers of either communion, as persons duly ordained to the preaching of the Gospel according to the rule and practice of their own church through prayer and the laying on of hands by those commissioned thereto;

2. That means be sought to recognize and place under a general rule the measures by which communicant members of either communion at home or abroad are welcomed in the other, as members of the Catholic Church of Christ, to the Table of the Lord;

3. That from time to time delegations be invited to bring greetings and information from one church to another, in formal assembly, thus expressing fraternal recognition and conveying friendly encouragement in Christ.

4. That in order to foster the spirit of mutual understanding and sympathy between the churches, their clergy, candidates for the ministry and laity be encouraged to seek opportunities of forming a better acquaintance with each other, of studying in either communion the history and genius of the other, especially in theological seminaries and in the exchange of professors, and of cooperating in public service.

A CONCORDAT TO PROVIDE MEANS

For Local Unity Where It Seems Desirable

This Concordat is a step in carrying out the Declaration of Purpose adopted by the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, meeting in Cincinnati in October, 1937, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, meeting in Philadelphia, May 26—June 1, 1938. The said Declaration is as follows:

"The two churches, one in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith, accepting the two Sacraments ordained by Christ, and believing that the visible unity of Christ's church is the will of God, hereby solemnly declare their purpose to achieve organic union."

The Proposed Concordat

The immediate purpose of this agreement is to provide means whereby each church may wherever it seems locally desirable assume pastoral charge of the members of the other church and offer them the privilege of the Holy Communion, thus establishing one congregation.

The primary difficulty lies in the differing views of the ministry. But there is large agreement. Both churches believe the ministry is part of God's will for His church. Both believe that in ordination the church is acting for God, and that it is He who ordains. Both believe that the succession of the ministry is a continuing visible sign of the continuous life of the church, and that the laying on of hands is the apostolic method of continuing that succession. Both believe in episcopal ordination, the one by a bishop, the other by a Presbytery acting in its episcopal capacity.

Finally, both churches believe that all practice in regard to the ministry should look forward to one which may have universal acceptance; and both recognize that a truly reunited church would be something greater than either and inclusive of both.

The position of the two churches has not, however, been the same as regards the recognition of each other's ministries. The ordination of ministers* in the Protestant Episcopal Church has been accepted by the Presbyterian. On the other hand, ministers of the latter church entering the ministry of the former have been required to accept reordination. In view of the expressed purpose of organic unity, each church recognizes the spiritual efficacy of the other's ministry of the Word and Sacraments. And to assure the full acceptance of the following plan and noting the distinction between canonical or legal validity and spiritual efficacy whenever and wherever under the proper ecclesiastical authorities a minister may be commissioned to serve the members of the other church and to minister to them the sacraments, the essential Act of this Commissioning shall be as follows:

In the case of a minister of the Presbyterian Church, the bishop of the diocese concerned, when satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate, with attendant presbyters shall lay his hands on his head and say: "Take thou authority to execute the office of a Presbyter in this church now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

In the case of a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the moderator of the presbyter concerned, shall proceed in the same manner and use the same sentence.

In the ensuing service of institution or installation both churches shall be represented.

All baptized members of either church who have been confirmed or have made profession of faith shall be eligible to receive the Holy Communion wherever this arrangement has been entered into.

When the minister of one church has been commissioned in the other,

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* *Note: The term "ministers" as used in this document means the ordained clergy of either church.*

he shall continue to be amenable to discipline in his own church; but he shall be expected to report regularly to the bishop or presbytery, as the case may be, concerning the other's communicants committed to his charge; and in case of failure to exercise proper pastoral care or other delinquency, the authority of either church may present the matter to the body having jurisdiction, and may in its discretion terminate this relationship. And, furthermore, this commissioning to serve in other than his own church carries with it permission to do so only in the diocese or presbytery first concerned; and specific permission for the exercise of such commissioning must be given by the proper authority upon removal into another diocese or presbytery, as the case may be.

Whenever an arrangement of this kind shall be entered into between a diocese and presbytery, any ministers so commissioned shall have seats, but not votes, in the presbytery or convention of the other church; and also, it shall be the privilege of the bishop or some minister appointed by him to sit with the presbytery, and the moderator or some minister appointed by him, to sit in the convention of the diocese under the same conditions.

All these arrangements are regarded as *ad interim,* and the two parties to this Concordat hereby agree that conferences and negotiations shall continue until organic unity is achieved, reports being made regularly to the governing bodies of the two churches.

FOR STUDY AND REFERENCE

[Note: Most of the following pamphlets and books are published by, or obtainable from, the Joint Committee on Faith and Order, and Life and Work, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City.]

Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937. Faith and Order pamphlet No. 90. Price 10¢. Reduction for quantity.

Official Report of the Oxford Conference. 130 pages. 25¢ per copy; 10 or more, 20¢ per copy.

(The above two Reports are the basic documents referred to in the footnotes of *Getting Together.*)

Oxford and Edinburgh, 1937. The National Preaching Mission pamphlet. Contains the Messages from both Conferences besides the story of the two gatherings. Useful for general distribution. 16 pages. Single copies, 5¢; fifty copies, 75¢.

Edinburgh, 1937 by Hugh Martin. Interesting story of the Conference by a leading British member. Paper, 2 shillings. Published by Student Christian Movement Press, London, 1937.

Studies in Church Unity by Angus Dun. New 12-section study-course on Edinburgh theme. Very usable. Full bibliographies. Questions for discussion and suggestions for further study. 15¢ per copy. In dozen lots, 10¢ per copy.

The Second Conference on Faith and Order. Edited by Leonard Hodgson. Full official record of day-to-day proceedings at Edinburgh. Discussions and all Addresses. 416 pages. Price $2.50.

Toward Christian Unity. A Work Book for Women's Organizations. Single copy, 10¢; ten or more copies, 5¢ each.

The Oxford Conference by J. H. Oldham. Full official report of discussions and addresses. $2.00. Willett, Clark & Co.

World Chaos or World Christianity by H. S. Leiper. The American Secretary's interesting review of Oxford and Edinburgh written shortly after adjournment. Cloth, $1.50.

The Christian Advocate from January to June, 1938. Two full pages of class studies and quotations weekly. Files probably obtainable from the Methodist Book Concern, 420 Plum St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Edinburgh Litany, as led by the Bishop of Dornakal. (4 pages.) Valuable for group and congregational devotions. Price 1¢ per copy in lots of 20 or more. Order from Forward Movement, 406 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

GETTING TOGETHER: An introductory study of the findings of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences, 1937. Price: In lots of 5 copies or more, 10 cents each. Less than five copies fifteen cents each. Postpaid to one address when remittance accompanies order. Address: The Forward Movement Commission, 406 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, Ohio. (Printed in U. S. A.)